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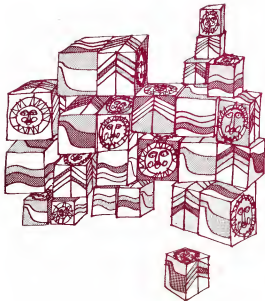
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Curtis Stacey

BILL SHEPHERD

Pioneer Australian Film Editor

Interviewed by Graham Shirley

On the night of 24 May 1971, Bill Shepherd arrived at the Government Centre Theatre in Sydney. He was there by invitation of the Film Editors Guild of Australia to introduce *Orphan of the Wilderness* (1936), which remains his favourite among the 17 features he edited for Cinesound in the 1930's and 40's. The film again lived up to its reputation, and its first two reels of carefully constructed animal sequences were simple illustrations of Shepherd's skill. After the film, there was to be a question-and-answer session, but Bill was totally unprepared for the clamour that ensued. With the last question answered, F.E.G.A.'s Vice-President Don Saunders presented him with a plaque with read:

"To William Shepherd,
Australian film pioneer and doyen of Australian film editors,
whose career began in our silent cinema of the twenties
and continued with great distinction and achievement through the
golden years of Australian feature films of the thirties and forties
who has edited more Australian features than any other editor
who is a film editor to this day

To whom he belongs at the Film Editors Guild
Acknowledging his outstanding contribution to film editing
And proud to award the First Life Membership"

With some justification, Bill was immensely moved.

Of course, there'd been kudos before. In reviewing *Throughbush* on 10 May 1936, the *Telegraph* wrote, "Technical excellence in Cinesound films can now be taken for granted. But the editing of William Shepherd and the photography by George Heath, are outstanding." *Sunday's Weekly*, in reviewing *It Isn't Done* on 15 March of the following year, reported "William Shepherd did the editing, he must have special genius, for his is a job of which the public is always ignorant, and this film proves that it is as important as any." Shepherd's role became even

more important on Charles Chauvel's *Forty Thousand Horses*, a film which *The Observer* in August 1941 called "uncannily exciting" and whose charge sequence is as well known to many as its counterpart in *Curly: The Change of the Light Brigade*.

Now aged 80, Bill Shepherd looks back at a film career which spanned the years 1924 to 1961. In that time he either worked at or studied nearly every phase of production, and what he hadn't known by the mid-forties he filled in via a self-funded trip to Hollywood. Documenting everything he saw, he returned to Australia in March 1947 with the intention of applying his knowledge to the industry's growth. The industry, as history would have it, didn't go for it, and Shepherd's know-how had scant application over an ensuing decade's work for the Films Division of the Department of the Interior (which later became the Commonwealth Film Unit, then Film Australia).

* * * *

I first met Bill Shepherd through research I was doing into the Australian work of special effects pioneer and director Norman Dawn. That was in September 1971, and unable to resist the temptation of branching out, I continued at that time and more recently to record conversations covering his entire career. Shepherd began by telling me that his interest in film production had stemmed from the desire to be an actor. Having had his appetite whetted by watching a film company at work at the Tarascona White City, he signed himself into the acting and voice production course being run by Mr Walter Bentley. This vocation was interrupted by two years' war service in France and was taken up again under the tutelage of one of the more intriguing local film enterprises of the twenties — Ramster Photoplays.

BILL SHEPHERD On my return in 1918, I took up a building course with the Department of Repatriation. It took me a while to recuperate, so I only did the small jobs and worked in the film school being run by P. J. Ramster. The advertisement claimed that an experience in a Ramster Photoplay would create you a career in acting, and has clones put out at three-figures a week, with a different group of between 12 and 15 on each evening.

The films don't appear to have had much of a release.

If Ramster had been backed, he'd have done much better than he did. He planned an adequate living from the money he received from students, but certainly not enough to rise to a level of lavish production. He liked to stick to his own suggestions, but he was well on the ball. He told us, for instance, that every movie you made on silent film had its own significance. It had to be part of the

story or it destroyed.

Which of the films were you in?

I played in *Mated in the Wilds*, *Should a Doctor Tiff*, and took the role of a "bunny" in *The Reverend Bell's Secret*.

Mated in the Wilds was filmed in 1921, and Ramster asked me if I could ride a motor bike. I said "Oh, course", and he sent me along to the Harley Davidson agent in the city. When I got there, the salesman came out with a brand new Harley

Davidson with a side-car and walked it down the street. I looked at it and said "Give it a kick-over, will you? My foot's a bit crook." So he kicked it over and I got going — turned left into Oxford Street and went all the way on to La Perouse at the same speed. You see, I'd never ridden a bike to my life.

Dad Ramster His professionals from outside the group?

Not as far as I remember. They went all taken from the cinema. He

The Stuttering Crow, November 1936. The camera is a Kodak 8.8. Small horizontal with the sound camera made the cut. E. 10. 8. Joe Seidler. Jack Fletcher. All Stuttering.

made a film called *The Triumph of Love* (1922) with Jack Chalmers, the Bronx show-busier here, but like the others it didn't make money. As a matter of fact, it would be interesting to know how many important people of later years trained with Rasmus. Not so much performers, but people fairly well up on the social scale.

It was through Rasmus that you began your association with Jack Fletcher and the Standard Laboratory.

Yes. Fletcher's first job was in 1915 as a junior with Union Theatrical. I met Jack when he'd been with Rasmus a short while, and we became firm friends. In 1926 he accepted the money for a two-reel comedy of Rasmus's on Red Skelton's *Girl Friend*?

Did he finance any others?

Not as far as I know. He knew something of my building ability and asked if I'd come terms and conditions a laboratory for two buildings on Central Avenue at 38th St. It was a five job for one man, involving four rooms: 32 by 12 each, and 14 feet finished installing the tanks when Arthur Higgins arrived. Arthur was fairly busy and asked Jack if he could film a language drive for him. Jack said he'd like to but had promised that in the next few days he'd complete an order of five numbers and end-of-month for Universal. Arthur said "Why can't I handle that?" So that's how it started. Jack went, I pointed, developed and dried the Universal order for three days and two nights straight through. That was November 1924. From that time, I stayed on. I developed and printed and, positive, cut and did everything. Fletcher had fixed his lab with a little old step-printer and later got money from his father to buy a new Bell and Howell printer.

What was the camerawork?

Quite often we'd travel the country using literary advertisements for small merchants or whoever wanted to make themselves known through the local cinema. Otherwise we'd freelance around work for Topical Films in England, and for Kingman and Paine in New York. You took an item; as if you were a freelance journalist taking a news item and the money would apply according to the subject and amount of footage they used.

Did you always do the editing?

Fletcher was one of the few cameramen in the twenties who were in his own editing. Rasmus usually cut his own films, and any editing that was needed on our advertising and newsreel shots was done by him.

So Fletcher handled the camera and shared the lab work, while you did the cutting.

That's right. There were no major projects, mainly the advertising films. But I never saw Fletcher cutting. He passed it all over for me to do.

Was anyone in Australia recognized

purely as an editor?

The only editor of note during the twenties was Mervyn Doolittle. In fact, she edited *The Birth of a Nation* (1926) to about 32 reels and several years later I was given the job of bringing it down to 16.

So loudly speaking, this was the first time you'd cut a feature?

I suppose you could say that.

Why was it released?

They wanted to re-release it, and it was too long. The story was told in episodes, so my job wasn't too hard.

Between 1927 and '28 you left Fletcher and went to work with Jack Bruce at the Commonwealth Film Labs.

That's right. Bruce and Cy Sharpe had recently returned from America to establish the lab in Commonwealth Street Raffles. In 1928, Sharpe directed an anti-film feature called *The Menace*. It was financed by a little called Jackie who had a business down at the Quay. Sharpe, who was a good art director, designed the sets, I built them, and Bruce did the camerawork and the editing. The story might have been alright, but it didn't get anywhere and we did the film in the same year. I was loaned to the Rasmus of Rasmus as a grip. Scotty Dunlop directed that, and it was produced by a company called Film Film Productions.

In 1928, there was a power struggle at Commonwealth and I got kicked to back Sharpe. Luckily, Bruce won and we were both out. Sharpe was replaced by Phil Holden, whose father had co-financed the lab. In the first place. After this wrangle, I reported again with Fletcher, who at that time had resigned his position with Bruce. I came with a little name crown from his parents was beginning to experiment with sound. Soundtracks had been established to produce talkie shorts and commercials, and Fletcher had shifted his position to the Lecture Hall at the Showground.

Did he intend to use it as a soundstage?

No, there just hadn't been enough room in the laboratory. We were at the Showground for a year, then we moved back to Raffles. Before we moved, I remember demonstrating sound film techniques at one of the Royal Easter Shows.

There were several others trying to develop sound at the same time, wasn't there?

Yes, but Fletcher didn't throw a thirty-hundred-dollar into the works, we'd have been six months ahead of everybody else. De Forest Phonofilm had set up locally in 1927 to cover the opening of Parliament by the Duke of York. The original soundtrack was recorded in a row, and the ship they got at his replacement was called Ward De Forest's camera was fitted with an A.I.D. tube, and

"Fletcher cut the three reels. Melbourne Sound Effects, by order the show operators of the Raffles Showground."



Bill Shepherd (right) leaves a picture line in Hollywood

after the anti's departure Ward remained in Australia with two of these tubes.

By 1928, the two had been reduced to one, and hearing of its existence Fletcher approached Ward, made a purchase and brought it out to Raffles. The device was just like a small fluorescent tube of tubes, about as long as three finger joints and about as thick as my thumb. It required 600 volts for illumination, and from there it could connect to light signal amplifiers. By the time we got the thing glowing, it was about five o'clock in the afternoon and I said "That's okay Jack. Now put it on the table and let Christ's wife don't touch it. We can get on with it in the morning." I was twice quite pleased, because this stroke of luck was about to place us months and quite a few quid ahead of anybody else in the field. But I hadn't reckoned on Fletcher being a bare moulder and I arrived the next morning to find the tube shattered into a million pieces. He'd come out during the night, clipped the battery on, started soldering and had crossed the wires. Naturally, the tube had shattered and had blown up.

So now there was the prospect of developing our own process or going up campily. We'd seen pictures of the Western Electric tube, and it operated on the principle of a variable light slit. From the operation of our ball printer, we knew about the basic principle of variable density light sources. I don't recall that Fletcher did much reading on the topic, but it was a simple case of looking at the small number of available processes, and looking at the optical track on imported films and saying "Why can't we do the same?"

The basic problem was that some of the locals who'd been representing were prepared to talk about what they'd heard. We knew that Chalmers was holding out as desperately as ourselves, but neither of us were willing to bring about it. I

knew nothing about amplification, and if somebody had started talking about copyright I'd have wondered what the hell he was getting at.

Had you ever considered sound-effects?

Yes, we were thinking of doing it on one stage, but we found it more advantages in the optical system.

Our breakthrough into optical sound came after we'd studied Fletcher's British General Electric audio, which was known as the "Gukko". The "Gukko" had a long arm that extended to varying widths against a magnet. On the end of this arm I placed a small blade of tempered steel with a fine point for one of the pins. Suspended above this was another blade which could be moved up or down to get the required thickness of an inch between the two of them.

So the upper blade was constant?

Yes, but that's where we had trouble. We didn't know anything about the expansion and contraction of the rubber diaphragm which held the blade down. As soon as the atmosphere changed, the rubber moved a quarter of a thou and changed the density of the light being laid through the pen.

Our first sound using the transfer blade was transferred from the record of an orchestra. We developed our own soundtracks in a 350 foot belt, but we had a problem with rock marks which could change the density of the track. To get over that we coated the marks with paraffin every time we developed.

Could you have used this sound commercially?

Only if we'd have been able to control the diaphragm sequence. As I said, we didn't know enough about it then.

But could you say that you evolved the first Australian sound-on-film process?



Bill Shepherd (left) meets Prime Minister John Curtin in a White House room. Navy photo (1941)

It's very hard to determine. Just off the record, I'd like to consider that we were the first.

How close was the competition between yourselves and Fleischer?

They'd been making about four a year while and I knew that any sound they had wasn't considered too wonderful. In fact, what they achieved before the introduction of the R.C.M. tube couldn't have been considered as sound at all. Probably realizing this, they came over to Fleischer's for a demonstration. Before their arrival, I told Fleischer that our numbers needed two new 45-volt batteries. He said "She'll be right," and shortly afterward he walked Arthur Searth with Bert and Cleve Cross. We went out to make a special test of the Union Theatres, but right in the crucial moment the batteries gave out. That was the finish of the CinemaScope negotiations and they left us to it.

Two months after that, CinemaScope had to hear about the British General Electric plan (the 30 can't be denied). However, that Searth and Cross had some technical knowledge than we did. The main difference came with their ability to get better density with the glow tube itself. By that time, we'd abandoned the "Goddie" for a tube we'd imported from Britain.

The McDougall Sisters approached us and asked if we'd add sound to the silent version of *The Cheaters* (1929). We agreed to add music and effects out of the Showdown, but at that time the negotiations weren't very good and the McDougalls dropped our process and moved down to Allan Rex at Varsity in Melbourne.

I saw "The Cheaters" again quite recently and thought it was beautifully photographed.

Oh, Fleischer was a good cameraman. He'd gone to Hollywood with Jack Brann, but he'd learned most of his skill out here. We used to do a lot of tests with the camera. He old mate had bought him

a Bell, and at one time I think we'd already 30 multiple exposures on the one piece of film. First he did the workers, then gradually Ed in the remainder. He was a great snail. He got hold of a lot of old films, not just for entertainment, but to study, to get ideas.

What stock was he using?

Belgian stock, Gevret. We were getting it in 500 foot lengths, it was a little slimmer than today.

I suppose you edited most of *Standstills* work?

Yes. As in the earlier days, Fleischer did the camerawork and I handled the promising, editing, and after 1929, the sound. My first Showdown editing was done from a 35mm projector. You'd project your film, run it through again, then make it snap and cut it.

With the coming of sound, I began to experiment. One day, I packed up a small book whose every page contained dots which flicked over and gave the impression of movement. By recognizing the dots, you could create an entire new dimension. Then I realized that film editing was at the mercy of the illusion, something that could be done by you, through which you could vary an audience's reaction. If you cut your shots with a rhythm in mind, they would flow. If that rhythm was destroyed with a jerk, the audience would become disoriented.

The same principle applies to animation — what the eye sees but the mind doesn't is an optical illusion, something that takes years to perfect. Animation has learned to short-cut movement, to under-emphasize without making the things too basic.

Having built speed within a sequence, you must slacken its pace before you can work at the opposite direction. An illusion can only come from an advance movement, and begins like one of the faintest hints of editing. The book taught me that, and later on at CinemaScope I got hold of a good American picture I'd

seen, placed it on the wheel and analyzed the thoughts behind the cutting. You had to be dedicated to do that, but I remember staying down for days to study the particular sequence in *San Francisco* (1936).

Had you ever discussed this with other editors?

I met several like Merv Donaldson, but I never discussed editing technique with any of them. I actually picked up what I could along the way. In many respects, it was just cutting by instinct.

What were the negotiations between *Standstills* and *Killer Stakes*?

I think Frank Thrupp first wanted some of my price. He'd heard about *Standstills* and came out with his will to see a couple of our shorts. He told us that while he was recently married, he wasn't completely satisfied and wanted a demonstration. Fitzhugh, who normally did all the negotiating, said "Yes," set up his equipment and photographed Mr. and Mrs. Thrupp in long-shot, medium-shot and close-up. They left us, Jack took the film to his lab for processing, and sat down to read a book. The hours passed, Jack became more involved in his readings, and by the time he'd finished the film out of the processor, it was well cooked.

The next morning, we took the sound down to the Regent Theatre and asked Bill Marshall to pump through an inch light at point of view. Unfortunately, the machine in light meant an increase in background noise, which went on the dialogue. Naturally enough, Thrupp wasn't impressed and told us to forget about the deal. From there, he went to America, but he'd purchased our equipment. *Standstills* might have had a future.

Was *Standstills* in trouble before the Thrupp negotiations?

Yes, we'd really had quite a lot of trouble by that stage. In fact, *Standstills* was only really a going concern for about twelve months.

Then I'm surprised to see from your records that *Standstills* was still running in 1932.

Well I went to CinemaScope something like a week after *Standstills* had folded. Rex Hill knew I'd been working with Fleischer and Brown, and before I got onto features I cut a lot of "A" shorts for the sound segment. I think I landed on the sixth edition. This I covered onto shorts which included *The Queen of Port Arthur* and *Over 70 Cuts*.

When I arrived there, George Macdonald was just finishing the editing of *On Our Selection*, but he didn't want to do editing, he wanted to do camerawork. He got sick just before he was due to cut *The Squatter's Daughter*, so I took his place.

Macdonald gets a co-ed's credit as "The Squatter's Daughter".

I know, but he didn't cut a foot of it.

You mentioned that he'd made a winding mechanism.

Yes. It made provision for the removal of any one of the four rolls that were running through the sprocket without disturbing the rest of the film. It's still the only way to work. I made one out at the B.O.A. at Berwood that cost 30 pounds. You could change from 16 to 35 straight away and drive all four mechanisms at once. As it is today, you've got to take everything off the arm to get at the fourth roll, and you need just "wheel" away from the mechanism of editing. That's why I never had a place in the editing room.

The whole process has changed, and it shows. Today you make most of your decisions on the Moviola. There's a foot and a half gone by the time you've put your foot down. You can only judge properly timing by looking at the film in front of you and keeping its shape in your mind, not when it's being cut.

The first feature I did at CinemaScope was in *The Wake of the Bounty* (1933). CinemaScope was using CinemaScope's studio as well as its staff and it was taken off the schedule to work on the film. The first day that Ernest Flynn came on the set all the women were around him. He was a fine looking chap — like a Greek goddess.

God or Goddess?

Goodness. They had a big set in the studio. Tom Higgins had done the shooting in *Twists and Turns* Island. I cut the whole thing.

How long did it take you to get a "system" going at CinemaScope?

Not too long. The room was plotted out. I hung "No Smoking" signs above the benches and was given two assistants. The first two assistants were as good as when they got going they could tell you the edge number for the beginning and end of every scene.

Was the studio giving itself for cinema-tion production?

There'd been some doubt when they began *On Our Selection*, but its success had ended them to go on. After *On Our Selection*, there'd been attention to the whole studio. We took over the upstairs room and the new sound room somewhere else.

Was you doing your own neg. cutting?

Oh yes, we were doing everything. The way it happened was this. The negative came up from the laboratory and the assistants would check it for scratches or dirt marks. We saw everything's finish. I usually had to say something about it and for that reason it was known as a bit of a bastard. Then the assistants would synchronize the sound with the negative and send the negative to the print. We didn't have an editing machine, but we used a rubber stamping device to a bell and Howell's operator, and numbered according to the section of the script. Each section was represented by a letter of the alphabet.

Hill would see the rushes with the crew, and together we'd pick the takes to be used. These takes would be filed away in the vault after they'd



A rare photograph of Bill Shepherd and Ken Hall on the set of *Shane*. Shepherd is on the left, Hall on the right.

been printed, and for one reason or another certain takes would be held. The students and I would then decide what sequence they were going to cut. Half the time I told them what I wanted and they'd go and edit. After two or three films, I didn't have to say as much. Terry or Phil would cut the sequence, we'd cut it once or twice on the projector and I might suggest an alteration. When there was a rough cut, I'd do the final edit.

How did you work with Ken Hall?

Hill and I would discuss the scene, so that I already knew what he was trying to obtain. There'd be cases where he'd say "I think it might be wise to trim that close-up," and while I'd always say "All right," it would occur that I might trim it or I might not trim it at all. The next time he saw it, I'd say "Does that look alright?" and he'd say "Yes." If he said "We'd better take out a few feet," I might only take out an inch. That was the way I worked. I generally cut it as I felt I should, but if he was adamant, then I had no say in it. Mind you, if we liked a story we began, we'd put the scenes into it.

Which of the films came into this category?

There was that weakness in most of them.

Did Hall's courage allow you to do this effect?

Oh yes, we were working together all the time. I'd often go to the studio to get an idea of what he wanted from the editing, and as we weren't so far behind shooting, I could ask Hall for extra shots if I needed them. If he thought this was reasonable, he'd go out and shoot them. We normally had a rough-cut a fortnight after shooting had finished, and *Granddaddy* (1933) was the first we took to travel from the start of shooting to its premiere at the State Theatre.

That's pretty tight.

Real of *The Squatter's Daughter* was premiering at the State while real time was coming off the printer at Bondi. I have an idea we'll make an alteration, and real time will have to be altered too because it contained the broken sequence. We speeded up the drying with a bath of acetone.

Whose decision was it to let that sequence?

New and then we'd cut a sequence if it was possible. There'd be a lot of it during the silent era, but the more consideration at the time was how it would affect your trade. It didn't matter for the audience because any dialogue was being edited, and there was a lot of other stuff.

In most cases we previewed the film before its audience. Sometimes it was done with a double-reel, but there were very few places you could do this. The preview would tell you if the film needed tightening and the way especially created with comedy. I used to be in the audience of every film screening. Quite often, we'd bring a film in for cutting from its final release.

What about general release?

Oh yes, if we had the opportunity. There were usually eleven prints on general release, but if we were cutting after release we'd only own one or two prints with the major prints. Even though you couldn't recall the New Zealand prints and you couldn't make another print, you could cut the prints that existed.

I noticed that in *"The Silence of Duna Maitland"* (1934) there's a lot of cutting around in the pulp cut scenes.

Yes, we had to cut it down.

Ken Hall must have shot that from about five different angles?

Could have been. The main trouble came with trying to get something out of the scene playing the scene. Instead of running the scene speech up to the breakdown at the one shot, we had to keep cutting around.

Running the entire master shot would have been impossible.

Cinequ岸 was finally on its way with that film. The films, which were in the form of book pages were written out by Jack Shepherd-Smith. He was a brilliant efforts man. His typical printer was a Bill and Howard modified with a lot of Mexican plates, and he later put together quite an elaborate marriage of wires for the fiction people in *Dad and Dave Come to Town* (1934).

How involved were you with preparation?

I usually timed and annotated the script of a film before it was shot, then we had a preparation conference. There'd be the director, the set men, cameramen, soundmen myself—all the key members of the crew—and we'd talk about the script and the film as a whole.

Were the shots planned before Hall went out to shoot?

Oh yes, we all had a rough idea to start with. The script guy would know what sequences were going to be done and Hall would work out the shots every night before shooting.

Did you ever suggest to Hall that he cover a sequence in a certain way before he went out?

No, no. He had his own ideas. I'd only make a suggestion or location if I saw that what he was shooting wouldn't cut with what he'd already shot.

What was your feeling about the use of location sound?

With all due respect, I think you saw a lot of atmosphere by trying to use an alternative. *Tail Hunters* (1917) had the best outdoor sound we ever did. In fact, it's probably the best outdoor sound that's ever been done anywhere.

Why was that?

Because it was done in the clear blue yonder. Mind you, we had a big sound problem. The actors would run through their dialogue with this deafening noise going on, and when we were ready for a take we'd fire a gun and start barking because that in most cases, the dogs things kept quiet for the duration of a shot.

How closely were you working with the musical director?

Pretty close. After we'd finished a sequence, the musical director would come out and we'd run it for him. We'd work out whether there was anything that needed to be added or held down with the music, then he'd go away and write it. We knew the timing, so that when the time came for shooting we knew exactly what was going to happen.

Were there any special demands on you with *"The Broken Melody"* (1936)?

Only in getting the playback ready. The post person for the sound was worked out in sequence and played back on the set. We had a timing device and we had to work out the timing in relation to the clock work. Speech was established by start-

marks on special leaders at the head of the image and soundtrack.

As a story it should never have been made. Even though I was trying to compete with something that the Americans had perfected, it did give us the knowledge of playback with music and vocals. The performers occasionally went out of speech but the sound men and I were on the look-out. If this happened halfway through a song, I'd advise that we change the tape. We'd run right through if we could. Quite a few times we had to take it by removing scenes from the scene.

In 1937-38, we started preparing for a move to the industry, and the only reason I wasn't shocked was because Cinequ岸 couldn't do without me. The funny thing about it was that we were going to sign up with the proprietors, who were very strong at the time. We had a meeting attended by Hill, the Cinequ岸 employees and people from Filmcorp, but most of them didn't have enough guts. When we went back to work the next morning, everybody was put on the list and asked why they'd been at the meeting. We'd have got an industry going then, which would have been a terrific thing. If we'd all stuck together, everybody's wages would have risen to a level compatible with feature films.

Did you have much contact with overseas suppliers?

Well, the biggest row of the decade was prompted by the arrival of Kodak's New York man. We'd always paid good prices for the stock we'd been using and had never thought to question its quality. The representative took one look at our film and said "This is terrible. All of this stock was out of date six years ago." That was about 1918, and I think that little affair started as some respect.

They'd been able to send over inferior stock because we honestly didn't know what to look for. This applied to many of our activities. With the help of trade journals and hearing me, we had our own editing equipment, sound equipment, camera equipment, and even the film-propulsion strip. We had the occasional spare part and overseas references were vague, so that most of our equipment was built through trial and error.

Who normally did the continuity on the production? Was there a continuity girl?

No, the script girl did continuity. It was also the director's job. He had it all worked out in his shooting script.

In *"Lovers and Luggers"* (1937), which is in many ways quite a sophisticated film, the opening sequence is full of gliding continuity scenes, with Lloyd Hughes leaping from one side of the room to the other with every cut.

We'd certainly must have cut the bloody film. It was never like that before. Let's get right down to this. Most of the ABC's versions were the ones that were cut in England. Instead of sending a dummy negative,

*Terry Butler and Phil Bailey. Phil Bailey was later replaced by Nip Munn.

BERT BAILEY Grandad Rudd

Adaptation by STEELE JARD

Film Editor.....WILLIAM STEPHENS
Assistant Director.....JOHN YOUNG
Production Manager.....JOHN SCOTER
Casting.....FRED FINLAY
Chief Musician.....EDWARD BEDFORD

Screen Adaptation
VICTOR ROBERTS and
GEORGE D. WAXEN

DIRECTED BY

Ken G. Hall

Produced by
BERT BAILEY

Photography
FRANK HURLEY
GEORGE WATTS

Recording
WILLIAM STEPHENS

Cinemound sent the original across to England. Quite a number of films were bagged in this way.

"Let George Be It" (1938), for instance?

Oh yeah. That was really an excellent film. Why they cut it God Almighty knows.

About 18 months ago, Hall and I about re-edited *Life of Charles Swags Out* (1939) from the three surviving prints. The original negative had been lost. It was for the ABC and it wasn't shown because of copyright problems. But on the strength of the new 35mm and 16mm prints, it was certainly the best suited for television of all the Cinemound films. Its shooting style was similar to a lot of features and some made for TV today.

Why was it shot this way?

I don't know. As you go along you develop an idea.

You've often said that your favorite film at Cinemound was "*Oryon of the Wilderness*".

Yes, it was. I've always considered it my picture because I took particular care with the animal sequences. For weeks we filled the studio with trees, ferns, anemones, kangaroos, dingoes, rabbits, snakes and lizards, and let them act in *Altogether*, we shot between 25 and 34 thousand feet, and I didn't really know how it was going to work until I'd run the footage and decided on how to cut one shot with the next. I wouldn't say the first two reels were without a film, but I certainly hadn't been given a morphine for that reason beyond knowing the way it was going to start and end. We had footage of a snake that had had nothing to do with footage of a frog, but we cut them together to make it look as if the snake had ate the frog. Then we had the ostrich being attacked by the kangaroo, the snakes being frightened by the hawk, and while there was nothing preplanned, it all worked out magnificently.

Just before this, the Americans had released a natural picture called *Sequela* (1934). It was well done, but a number of American trade people wrote across and said they considered *Oryon of the Wilderness* the best animal feature ever made. The "best animal" animal wasn't a good, but when you consider that it was before us a supporting feature, we didn't do too badly.

What other sequences are you proud of?

Oh, the change in *Forty Thousand Horses*.

Would it rate equal with "*Oryon of the Wilderness*"?

I think the animal picture was better because we made something out of material that didn't exist in the first place. I suppose you could say the same thing applied to *Forty Thousand Horses*, because the change was not with a different story in mind to the way it was shot. Channel had covered the sequence mostly in three-quarter and long-shot from above.

came on the Cronwell southside. After we'd done a complete I worked out what insects I wanted to make it more dynamic. If we already had a horse leaping over the camera, I'd ask Channel to shoot something like the horse leaping to hit a soldier. I learned a lot of what you could get with the camera from San Francisco. It contained a lot of model work, but the situation buildings falling to crush people was created in the camera.

Channel worked on *Forty Thousand Horses* for quite a while. The thing was dragging a lot and Horns were getting fed up. They came to me and said "We could give you a shot." I said "Oh yes", and they told me to go ahead and do what I thought best. I wanted to cut the change down, but Channel didn't. I still think it's too long. I'd like to go down and cut a little more out of it. Horns said "If you cut it down and finish the picture, we'll give you a few quid." So we finished on time and I received an additional 25 pounds — a lot of money in those days.

At that time Cinemound was doing a lot of work for the Department of Information?

I worked on fifteen of these shorts, some of them as director. The biggest of them was *Australia Marches with Battle* (1941), and in 1941 I directed 24,000 feet of film for *Know Your AR: Australia, Know Your AR* was supervised from Australia by Frank Capra and among many other things, we shot footage of Carlin and Menzies signing the declaration of war.

Did you edit any of "Smiley" (1946)? I said that Terry Black advised the editor's credit.

I edited the two reels across the night across the Pacific. They were the most reels and Hall wanted me to work on them. The description of the trip took me up in the script, and I estimated that it would come out at 2000 feet.

How could you judge that?

I worked out how the reels would be put in relation to the action. It was all in my mind.

In 1953-54, it looked as though Cinemound were really going to start making films. Ken Hall was going to produce at the Fagwood studio and last season to Fagwood and America to buy the necessary equipment. When the British announced their military presence, Ridge thought "better of the situation and put a stop to all the plans. The equipment, which included new cameras and the latest back-projection equipment, was sent back.

Dale's Hall try to set up several production after that date?

Well when I was in America between July 1946 and March 1947, I got in touch with a company which financial films for the independent theatre and put forward the suggestion that Australia make Westerns. It was just the time to do that sort of thing and was years ahead of the idea of location shooting in Spain and Italy. One



The 1974 Perth International Festival was a nice change of pace from the Melbourne and Sydney Festivals for three basic reasons. Firstly the programming is more adventurous. The films are rather more antipathetic, and generally the work of younger directors. Some thirty-five features were shown, including a large selection of new German and Swiss cinema. Secondly Perth differs greatly in its choice of guests. This year they included Werner Herzog, Peter von Avellan, Daniel Durel, Gerbrand van Efferden, Michael Thornton and Adolfo Meloso. For once an Australian festival has invited directors of relevance! The final point of divergence is the minimal number of shorts shown. This year there were twelve, of which many were in-

teresting, especially the brilliant *Mille Mille*.

As a festival Perth is not run as meticulously as the others, but it has a vitality they often lack. This is best seen in the way the official guests are not partitioned off into reserved seating but sit amongst the audience. This makes it far easier for people to go up and talk with a director. A director's seminar is also informal, taking place after a screening in the theatre itself.

"The goal of every artist must be his own extremity", Jean Cocteau.

The Mother and the Whore's Alexandre (Jean-Pierre L  aud) spends most

of his time reading in boulevard cafes, broke, as he points out, Germaine needed the presence of life to work in. "I can't write but at least I can read", he explains. Alexandre is the classic non-working intellectual, more interested in talk than action because it makes less demands. Alexandre also spends his time living off women, his love life polarized between the noble ideal of Gilberte (Isabelle Weingarten), and the earthy Marie (Francine L  aud). The film opens with Alexandre still chasing his noble ideal, delighting in its sense of unreality. "Do I love her simply because she was in a Breton film?" he mutters, only to later spend on the bridge from *Four Nights of a Dreamer* in a mood of similar desperation. When living with

The International Perth Film Festival 1974

Scott Murray

Merle, Alexandre shows little signs of affection, no doubt saving his energies to keep the relationship balanced to his liking. Into this relationship comes a picturesque nurse Veronique (Françoise Lebrun), who Alexandre sees about seducing. During one of Merle's trips to London Veronique stays on at the flat, but on Merle's return she finds the thought of sex in her hospital room abhorrent. Consequently she drifts away, mysteriously dropping in at the flat. One terrifying scene has all three in bed together, a competition quietly raging over who Alexandre will screw first. When he moves onto Veronique, Merle dashes off to suicide in the bathroom before Alexandre could prevent her. Then in the film's most moving sequence Veronique leaves back against a wall, a tear running down her cheek, talking of her need to have sex with as many people as possible. Her promiscuity is in fact an exaggerated denial of what she feels within, that sex without love is meaningless. This denial is beautifully hinted throughout the film by her over-use of the words "minimum" and "maximum". Finally through her veil of tears, Veronique declares that what she needs is marriage and children, because only that can cleanse the act of sex. Alexandre stalks her to marry him and the couple while vomiting with fear and drunkenness, Alexandre sinks to the ground in utter hopelessness.

The Mother and The Whore is a violent film, but also one of great tenderness. What makes it truly extraordinary however is its purity, its uncompromising honesty. Eustache has taken many characters and incidents from his personal life, and recreated them as accurately as possible. Nearly all writers, with the exception of poets, revere and subliminate their past experiences. Though a particular situation may be drawn upon for inspiration, the resultant creation bears a relation in terms of ideas only, the data is being inventively disguised to protect the innocent as it were. Eustache doesn't appear to do this at all. For example, Françoise Lebrun plays herself, the hospital nurse is the actress Rose, the fat is Eustache, as are the actress Jean-Pierre Léaud were, and so on. Also the usual concessions to the banality of locations and some lengths have not been made. If Eustache were a sequence of very simple telephone conversations, that's exactly how he films it. He doesn't try and compress it into another scene or stretch it out with dialogue. There is a fade-in from black, the phone rings, some words are exchanged, the receiver is replaced, fade to black. Similarly there are many scenes in the same location with only fades in-between, it sounds, and is, extremely simple, but very few directors are prepared to pursue such an approach. Consequently **The Mother and The Whore** is a very liberating experience, because it shows that one can do exactly what one feels is right, irrespective of tradition. In

Eustache's cinema only two things are necessary: simplicity, and an uncompromising desire for truth. Because he has found both, **The Mother and The Whore** is one of those extremely rare films that truly liberate.

A major highlight of the festival was a retrospective of the brilliant films of Werner Herzog. Since Herzog is interviewed elsewhere in this issue, I will omit criticism in preference for some personal impressions. **Signs of Life** is apt for me his most moving film. It has a gentleness and peace that works cleverly against the desperateness of its message. The film ends with the soldier Shostak being driven away, now totally insane. A commentator remarks that "he was doomed to failure like all of his kind." The final shot, taken from the back of the truck, is a virtual reverse of the first which showed Shostak smiling for convenience. The circle is complete and closed. What is an effective about **Signs of Life**, is the way it slowly craves away at its audience long after it has finished, and only then does its true power become apparent. Its direct content is **Three Deaths** started small which is an angry and direct assault on its audience. Though a film of great insight, its effect disengages leaving the cinema and she remembers it more for the starkness of its conception than for its plot.

Both these films exist relatively freely within loose narrative structures. **Pets Mergens** is a more extreme example in that it abandons all form of narrative except for a repetitive sectionisation into "Creation", "Paradise" and "The Golden Age". The film itself is a highly personal impression of the deserts and towns of Northern Africa. There are, for example, endless tracking shots across sand dunes and barren lakes. At times there is a terse commentary — "In paradise you call hell without ever seeing anyone... you want to avoid having friends... make him dead" — but it plays so much against the film as with it, we do the music of Leonard Cohen it is a visionary film and one can only praise Langlois for frustrating Herzog's attempt to keep it secret.

With **Agave**, **The Wrath of God** Herzog has made a genre film with something extraordinary. It is more rigidly structured than his others, and for the first time sometimes irritates the weakest critics as those which merely further the plot, such as the split-up of the expedition and the proclamation of the Emperor of El Dorado. However when freed from narrative the results are brilliant. The sense of a world closing in at times so strong as to be almost unbearable. **Agave** is a film of great beauty and power.

Land of Silence and Darkness is perhaps the masterpiece of documentary film making. Herzog so carefully recreates the world of the

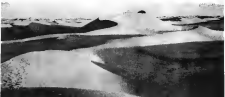
deaf and blind that it becomes accessible to us as is humanly possible. The film's beauty and sadness is unique, and no one will ever forget those images of a man talking to a tree with his hands, gently tracing out the shape of its branches.

Three very interesting Swiss films were shown at Perth, **Death of a Pigeon** **Clavier**, **The Expedition** and **Since Meyer**. All were shot on 16 mm black and white reversal and blown up to 35 mm, and each had a budget of around \$430,000. The quality of the blow-ups is extraordinarily good, the only major difference to 35 mm being the occasional loss of definition in long shots. The best of the three was Thomas Kiefer's **Death of a Pigeon** **Clavier**, a major film of investigative logic. Clavier (Weiss) is forced to expand the circus when Kiefer's death of the fives. Attempts to gain recompense result only a small sum of money. By chance Weiss witnesses an entire plague festival and consequently decides to perform a stage play on the effects of plague. He is, helped by a wealthy industrialist, Johannes Wagner, who succeeds in introducing an exhibition of plague infection rats. Whereas Weiss sees the plague as a liberating force which in destroying everything life-degrading makes everyone free and equal, Wagner sees it as a force of terror and repression under which the country will return to law and order. Thus two different men use the same weapon as support for opposed ideologies. However on discovering Wagner's true designs, Weiss is forced to forsake the temporary and illusory world of the stage for a starker and cruder reality. In a final performance Weiss staggers onto stage stricken by plague. As he is forced to re-evaluate the strength of his ideas, so is the audience. For example, throughout the film there are quick glimpses of Wagner's mansion. The film is accompanied by a classical piano work to create a desirable illusion of culture and wealth. Only as the truth about Wagner is revealed does the desirability of the house decrease, the final shot showing it boarded up and deserted, the music gone.

Peter von Gunten's **The Expedition** was prompted by recent Swiss Government decisions over the screening of Chilean refugees. Despite the country's proclaimed neutrality, selection procedures were used to avoid antagonising the Chilean Government and jeopardising trade agreements. This type of economic sell-out is the basis of **The Expedition**.

After the murder of the student Ivanov, the Russian revolutionary Matkovskiy escapes to Switzerland in hope of asylum. There he single-mindedly gives about his work using whatever means he can to further the cause. This even includes blackmailing Herzog's

Right: the terrible landscape of the Northern Sahara in Werner Herzog's **Pets Mergens**





daughter Metalle with some love letters after she fails to join him. The Russian Government has made requests for Njelschajev's extradition but they are initially ignored. Then arises the possibility of a trade agreement between the two countries, and Switzerland agrees to the extradition to save any embarrassment Njelschajev spends the remainder of his life in prison.

Von Ganten's film is a carefully detailed analysis of the mechanics and motivations behind extradition. However unlike the majority of political films, it is very low key and retains its poise through subtlety, not assault. There seem to me two basic reasons for the film's success: (1) being a historical film it argues in terms different to slogans used today, (2) it has a historical perspective that allows the audience to view it rather more objectively than a present day situation. The film also wisely avoids moral and political judgements which contributes greatly to its accessibility.

The last of the Swiss films was *Grise Minier*, a film I dislike quite strongly. Despite appearances of being politically perceptive it is essentially hollow and lifeless. At one point in the film a character, speaking for both herself and the director, attacks her boss for expanding the factory she works in, claiming that all profits belong to the workers. Yet surely if one sort of the boss-office refuses to forward financing another firm, von Effenterre is expending in exactly the same way as the capitalist. Both were personally involved, both employed others, both charged people for use of the finished article and so on. The reason such inconsistencies occur is because *Grise Minier* is not the labour of a heart-felt concern for the lives of the people it portrays, but the result of pseudo-intellectual philosophising. I consider *Grise Minier* a highly irritating and dishonest film, one which is intricately exposed by the phoniness behind its left content. "The only true culture is to be part of the masses".

History Lessons is an extraordinarily fine film, it truly innovates work in a greater little explored. *Grise* breaks everything down to a minimum, and then carefully rebuilds in a way that allows no element to gain more importance than another. A film is a whole and if any element stands out then the film has failed to a degree. When thinking back one remembers the locality of *History Lessons* not isolated shots or scenes, and if one deliberately considers one a single element, say the first drive into Rome, one finds the image flows smoothly into the next, the first political discussion in close-up, and so on. In a film of such calculated tone and pace there could be a problem of tedium, but *History Lessons* avoids it with a strongly developed sense of



Top: Thomas Koerner a South of France Circus Director. The director is "forced to establish his drive when he sees" *Grise Minier*, the film.

Centre: "The only true culture is to be part of the masses." Scene from *Grise Minier* vs *Grise Minier*. Bottom: Two workers from *Grise Minier*.

momentum. The use of innovative techniques and the intense relevance of the political dissonance make *History Lessons* a very important film.

Pasibinder's *All These Colored All* was somewhat disappointing after *Michael of Four Seasons* and *The Bitter Tears of Palm von Keel*. It takes a while to start moving but when it does it has a refreshingly stark quality about it. The cleaner women talking on the office stairs for example, and the family's violent reaction to Brent's marriage to the Moroccan Ali. Once again Pasibinder balances his film on the edge of melodramatic excess, cleverly flinging back at the audience the response he coaxed in the scene before. It is a deliberately uncomfortable film and a greatly effective one.

Michael Thornhill's *Between Wars* is reviewed elsewhere in this issue but it deserves double mention as it is, for me at least, the best of the recent Australian features. Though perhaps less carefully acted than some others, it has infinitely more to say, and it says it concisely. Thornhill justifiably views Australians as a race of ideological aesthetes who end up in movements more or less by accident. The film has considerable pace and humor, which fortunately is not of the over the top. One beautiful example is when the New Guard try to break up a farmers' cooperative picnic. The local constable arrives and quickly establishes some order. Confrontations are quickly offered but he brushes them aside with "I don't like people trying to do my job for me."

Essentially Ludwig II — Requiem for a Virgin King is a film of effects. Syberberg has taken the technique of compressing backgrounds two-dimensionally to its limit, erecting all scenes in front of back-projected slides which represent the palaces and groves of the Bavarian King. What a unfortunate it is that nothing seems to have been done to avoid the ugly brown haze around each of the actors, a seemingly inevitable problem of back-projection. Another device Syberberg uses heavily is that of background music, often to the exclusion of all other sound. For example the long sequence of Ludwig kneeling at the end is played exclusively with music. However too often one's emotional response to a scene is no more than a response to a particular piece of music.

Cinematic effects, including Syberberg's excessive delight in kitsch, are justifiable only if they contribute to an overall perspective, which in this case they don't. When the barber's robe slips off to reveal a Nazi uniform one is struck by a cleverness, but it is only superficial. Clearly it suggests that elements of the Third Reich existed in the Second, but what elements? Such questions are never



Top: The first political discussion from Brent's secondary *History Lessons*.
Bottom: (l-r) (Greta Miro) and her Moroccan husband Ali (Ali Had) (Ali) in Werner Pasibinder's *All These Colored All*.



answered and the film is ultimately little more than a tedious parade of technical effects.

Daniel Buwalda's *Le Voyage d'Amelia* is a comedy of great gentleness. Max, Leon, Clowé, Gino and Ben are drop-outs from a society they never can be part of. Together they plan a daylight heist but they clumsily blow it. At a loss with what to do with their stolen van, they agree to shove the corpse of an old lady's husband to a country cemetery. Most of the comedy is inventive and often quite spontaneous, especially in the heist: last twenty minutes. The film is however marred by an overuse ending, the old lady cheating them out of payment by dying.

In France where abortion is banned, *Histoires d'A* caused a great scandal. Although documentaries on abortion are also forbidden, the film has been secretly shown all over the country. Given the difficulties of its production it is a pity the result is so mediocre. Of course in such a situation excellence in France any documentary will be valuable, so it is difficult to criticize it severely. However it does have the same deficiencies of similar films elsewhere, including a tendency to polarize the issues. They either attack abortion as a form of murder, or defend it as a woman's right. *Histoires d'A* is clearly in favour of abortion and presents various opinions which support it. The arguments are mostly terrible though one lady has a novel insight: all male opposition is an indication of sexual inadequacy because abortion frees

women to love as they choose and turn themselves into a market place commodity.

The major disappointment of *Histoires d'A* is its low key attitude towards men. Conception is a result of union between a man and woman, and consequently any discussion on abortion must include both. However like most other documentaries and articles, the male's right to a voice is totally ignored, abortion seemingly only a woman's decision. So one form of cheerfulness merely replaces another.

Fuck Off Inmates From Finland is a disappointing documentary from Jörn Donner, especially after his excellent *Anna*. Despite a tendency towards boredom the film is informative, though in much the same way as Risto Järvelä's *One Man's War*. The situation in Finland is obviously critical and attempts at rectifying it are necessary, but the film is all too sombre and depressing. It is difficult to judge though, since the print shown at Perth had already been cut by the Finnish Censorship Board, a none too enlightened body. The film's relieving humour supposedly came from scenes about encounters interspersed through the film. For example one interviewer so doggedly follows a girl through various situations that when he ends up looking her in bed he is still questioning her.

An auto-portrait, *General Idi Amin Dada* certainly is not. Idi Amin has an amazing ability to send himself up, but instead of seeing it as that Schroeder keeps interluding. The best sequences in the film (the cabinet

meeting and Idi Amin displaying his children) work because they simply record. Elsewhere Schroeder deliberately distorts things to raise a cheap laugh, for example the cutting in of reaction shots taken at different locations. Another film indulging in such deception is *U.S. Stars Weep*. On one occasion while President Johnson is signing some agreement, he is surrounded by a collection of delegates all at rigid attention. However to suggest some element of devoutness, Bruck cuts in a shot of the delegates shuffling around behind Johnson. This cutaway was obviously taken when everyone was waiting for the ceremony to commence. Bruck's decision to put it elsewhere for a cheap effect is dishonest and quite misleading to watch. The truly sad thing though, is that any *Stars Weep* didn't come through it all. Instead of giving an insight into a man who is on record as saying that "the first thing a journalist should discover is that any government is run by liars and one should not believe what they say", the film shows (try as just an interesting curio. His recorded speeches have little life and consequently the strength of his words against corruption is not conveyed.

The idea of having a black man trained by the C.I.A. yet turning his knowledge against them has great potential, but even *Daphne* *Speak Like Set by the Door* is merely exploitative in the manner of *Shifft* and *Super Fly*. The whites are the sadists and blacks are of course beautiful. Women also slip into the stereotypes of either being sold-out friends of the whites, or hookers. *Speak Like* because it shows no respect for its material, soon being much more interested in an imitation of Hollywood style slickness.

Pimpes (Shabby) was a curious selection for an international festival. Widerberg's film is an universally seashore children's film, and without any redeemable quality. Seven year old Shabby becomes a superstar member of Sweden's soccer team after beating one of its champions on a local playground. However Shabby has only one trick — to kick the ball through the opponent's legs — and when he uses it for the twentieth time it is time to head for the exits. However for those who stay, the film angles off into a moral tale about Shabby being exploited by advertisers and rejected by friends. His school work also suffers and the future looks grim. However the film ends on a note of hope with ex-soccer star Shabby being asked "What is two plus two?" He gets it wrong, but as his teacher says, "It's right in a sense though, but we will leave that till another day." Long live Shabby, he has made that vital effort. With time like *Pimpes* and hence like Shabby, a better world is surely imminent. ■



Above: The Italian bartender (Barbara Hershey) from *88*
These Colours All



Juan María La Piedad

Cliff Green / Scriptwriter

Interviewed by John Tittensor

Cliff Green began writing for television in the early 1960s. After a period working for Crawford Productions—the Melbourne-based producer of television dramas—he began freelancing. Since then he has been involved in a number of television and film projects. He is probably best known for his quartet *Marion* which was screened by the ABC earlier this year. At present he is devoting himself solely to adaptation work and original television drama, notably the ambitious *Power Without Glory* series for the ABC and *Plumie* at Hanging Rock, the film to be directed by Peter Weir.

IV like to begin by asking how you first became involved in the kind of film and TV work you're doing now.

Well, where I was 24 I started working in the country, and began writing plays for the kids in the school. It was suggested to me that one of the plays could be broadcast and so I sent it off to the ABC, their response was that it was better suited to television than to radio. Now at this stage — 1961 — I knew nothing about TV, I hadn't even seen much of it since it still hadn't reached that part of the country, but I did what I thought was an adaptation and it went to air. This resulted in a commission for a six-part children's serial produced in Sydney, and I thought I was there, I thought I was a professional writer. But then I went through several years of not being able to get anything else on, when was very frustrating, and finally got back into the business through school programs, mostly television but with some radio work as well. Then the chance came up to join Crawford as a staff writer. I ended up staying there for three years — '69 to '71 — working on *Bluebirds* and *Maniac*, then resigned and went freelance, which is what I've been doing since.

A lot of people have been very outspoken in their views for the harshness commercial staff that Crawford requires. In retrospect do you feel that you gained anything from the time you spent there?

I gained an enormous amount. It was an apprenticeship really, and a very good one. I learned to work in close liaison with a production team, and worked with some very good people — writers, directors, actors — and I feel that the years I spent there were important for me just as they were important for other young writers who were there on staff. I've seen that Australian TV and cinema writing is already starting to benefit from the lessons learned of what worked and what the story was that playwrights have benefited from the *Prison* Factory experience — even though the original purpose was so totally different.

What about the complaint so often heard from all sorts of people who've

been with Crawford, that from the creative point of view the whole business is just creatively restricting?

In some ways that's a quite valid criticism you would perhaps have said that was that, and none of it had much to do with any kind of reality, it was more akin to a PR exercise for the Victoria Police. On occasions that could be pretty frustrating, but even within the restrictions you were able to find your way, to use the audience, and really to do quite a lot of work that you would never be allowed of anywhere. Along with people like John Dingwall and Howard Griffin, who were both writers on staff at the time — and very good writers at that — I feel that I learned a tremendous amount and was able to try out a lot of things.

So you feel that it helped lay the foundation for a professional approach to the kind of work — the quality work, if you like — that you're engaged in now.

I'm sure it did. I think, though, that the trick is to know when to get out. And when I did get out I had some checks in store for me, because although I had a certain reputation as a Crawford writer I had to prove myself to a lot of other people in new fields and I had to undergo a lot in order to be able to do this. I had to pull back and relax a bit, then really work to get some depth into what I was doing. Actually, having worked at Crawford opened a number of doors for me, but they only stayed open as long as I could prove that I

could one day and doing what I really wanted to do next. There was a gradual process of development and I certainly couldn't have written *Marion*, for example, immediately after quitting Crawford.

Having passed this from one kind of working situation into another quite different one, would you regard yourself now as a 'professional writer' or as a 'creative artist' — or do you think there's a middle ground?

I think it's a question of an amalgam of the two. I certainly consider myself a professional writer in that I take pride in writing to deadlines, to budgets, and even if required to specific audiences. I think that's a realistic attitude, it's no good writing to a vacuum and using nothing produced, nothing useful. But I'm also constantly trying to expand my own horizons and to push the business back a little more time. I like to think that the two states of mind, the creative and the professional, can be brought together so that the question of what's possible in a creative sense doesn't die at the public can be overlooked. This is something that can't be achieved overnight, but the kind of thing the ABC is doing at present seems to me to illustrate that it's beginning to happen.

So you see Australian cinema and television as, hopefully, moving towards the sort of thing we get now in intelligent American commercial work?

In the case of film I certainly hope so. And in the case of TV I'd like to see, and I'm convinced we're moving towards, the very good examples that existed in England some years ago.

Good from the point of view of creative people, you mean?

From that point of view, and from that of the audience in work, after all, they're the consumers.

While we're talking about audiences, who do you see as your audience? Who do you have in the back of your mind while you're working?

"Granted we had to crawl before we could walk, but we crawled a little too long and a lot too slowly."

was capable of better work than Crawford had been demanding. On the other hand I have to admit that there may have been some projects that I probably missed out on because somebody said to my agent, "We don't want a Crawford writer on that", and I know that in the initial stages of talking about *Plumie* at Hanging Rock there was a little resistance... I know too that it wasn't just a matter of working out of Crawford

mode in other programs. Both, for example, have fine openings which according to the commercial view of things would have had viewers rushing away at their thousands.

Do you think this indicates a higher level of popular taste, an increased sophistication, if you like, as the part of the average viewer?

There are a number of factors involved here. People are more aware of better-made stuff now, and they're better educated too, but essentially, I think, it's not so much a matter of seducing audiences up to scratch as of seducing managements, be they commercial or ABC, to business like ways of seeing their audiences. They've been having kind-of audience tests. Granted we had to crawl before we could walk, but we crawled a little too long and a lot too slowly. It's pleasing, though, to note now how closely the success of ABC programming is being observed by commercial managements, and while there's a strong element of polarization in the success for local product at present — bland material like *98* and *The Box* on one hand, recent ABC stuff on the other — there are grounds for hope that these commercial managements who are missing out on the serial business may get a clue as an attempt to regain their audience.

But do you really foresee a time when there's going to be the kind of money and facilities available for the production of local dramatic material, on TV at least, on the scale that there has been in England in the past?

I think we're already approaching that. The important thing here is that we've learned how to do things economically, and we're not going to need the sort of budgets required in England. *Power Without Glory*, for example, is a very elaborate project, 26 one-hour episodes, and its budget won't be anywhere near that of comparable overseas productions. But it'll be adequate. We've got a good, hard, efficient industry, at least on the production side and we should be building on this with material relevant to the Australian scene.

Your ideas on what might constitute this material are something I'd like to come to in a moment. But in regard to the expanding local situation you've just talked about: what are the opportunities for scriptwriters like yourself?

There's one major implication. In the past scriptwriters have written anything and everything. I personally have never worked as a serialist, although I could have had I wanted to, but I've done quite a bit about everything else from a heavily com-

sexual American-style series like *Spenser* though to the work I'm doing now for the ABC. That's typical, I think, and this is what's going to change. Writers are going to specialize more — I've started to already at present. I'm doing only purely original material like *Marlon*, together with adaptation work.

To come back to the question of Australian material: "*Marlon*" is probably the best-known thing you've done, and what immediately strikes home about it is that in contrast with the police show stuff, which is American in locale and in very little else, it comes across in its perceptions and its general feeling as a very Australian piece of work. I'd like to ask not so much what you were trying to say as "*Marlon*," as what you were trying to portray, what you were trying to get at.

To start with I'd like to stress that I see the writing of *Marlon* as a development from, rather than a conscious against, any Crawford correspondence, as it was an attempt to express certain feelings I had about Australia as a father, upon real way that I'd been able to in the Crawford situation. At the time I was very much aware of the dramatic work being done by people like David Williamson and Alan Duff — was intrigued by it and fascinated by it — and although there's no surface similarity between *Marlon* and, say, *The Razorback*, I felt that I was trying to come to grips with an Australia that was real. And to achieve this I felt a need to work on intelligibility and on realism in its own right.

Actually bringing *Marlon* to fruition was a remarkably happy experience: the ABC let me work with almost no financial or logistical restrictions — although my Crawford training meant that I instinctively worked economically anyway — and it was in it that Oscar Whitbread and I, then working together for the first time, had both been waiting for this very project to come along. I found it really very satisfying.

You were talking about working as unprofessionally as possible; is approaching "*Marlon*" in this way were you aware of using the traditional Australian myth-making device of going back into the past and taking country people as poor archetypes?

I wasn't necessarily aware of that, but I suppose it's a tradition I've inherited. I cut my teeth on Henry Lawson and still regard him as a master, and to go back to the country seemed to me to mean going back to a microcosm. And really, that still begs the question. I had taught in the country and had things to say about it, together with ideas from my own childhood that I wanted to bring on. And while the closed nature of rural society and its rejection of outsiders wasn't new themes on our literature, there hasn't been much TV about them, and I certainly don't feel that this is an area that I've finished exploring.

The pacing of "*Marlon*" is very

deliberate, very controlled — so much so that some people found the stories slow. This must have been a conscious thing.

I know I read that *Marlon* wasn't a success to the Crawford period, but as far as pacing is concerned I think it was. I felt very strongly that having a story spanning readily along with three sub-plots all humming away wasn't the only way to do effective television. There was also to some extent a reaction as that highly dramatic effects were avoided, as in a last scene down, such re-writing in book place had largely to do with that. And if I had another crack at the project, those are still certain questions, certain insights that I would either remove or pull down. The writing of *Marlon* was a very disciplined piece of work very often. I started deliberately in order to avoid problems in the way I think that TV in particular can achieve a great deal by moving away at the right moment and letting the audience involve itself retrospectively in the material. Getting the right balance can be tricky, though, you're working for a mass audience and you're got to be sure you don't leave them confused or disappointed.

Currently you're involved with *Peter War* on the planned production of "*Plume at Hanging Rock*." Could you give us some background on that?

I believe it was David Williamson who originally called attention to the book's potential as a film. *Peter War* became interested, but they David was unable to connect with it because of other commitments and he suggested that I should have a go at the script. All told, the project has had a difficult time, it hasn't gone into production yet, but getting my movie off the ground is a minor miracle and takes time.

However I've just heard that the AFDC has finally agreed to invest \$125,000 and the producers are confident that the rest of the \$350,000 budget will be available privately. Commencement of production is scheduled for next February.

I'd like to go a bit more into how the screenplay actually crystallized; what there was about the book that caught your imagination and how you decided to put the thing to work immediately.

Well for a start, it's a very fine book, a very well-written one. That's not to say that non-visual writing can't be made into good cinema, but if you've got something with instant visual appeal, then three-quarters of your problems are solved. I certainly wasn't the only one to spot this: there were a number of people very interested in the idea of filming the book and I think that happened because the inherent visual attributes of the story gave promise of a film that will have a long life and a very broad appeal.

But beyond that relatively superficial aspect, I think the theme — the sexual involvement, rejecting the literary moldings — is almost a reflection of the story, the history, of Australia. The book introduces a



Preproduction on *Marlon* with Helen Morse (Marion) and composer Cliff Green.



The country school teacher *Marlon* and Mr. Peasey (John Freewing), a secretary member of the school board.



One of *Marlon*'s pupils Katie Meant (Sally Crossley)



Richard Leno (John Brennan) signs the album in *Back*, for which Green wrote two episodes.



A scene from *Shilling* in Angkor, an episode of *The Phoenix Landing Festival*.

group of Anglo-Saxons into this stately alien and timeless environment and makes of the situation a strange combination of horror story, suspense, detective fiction and in some ways even a tender love story. Quite a unique book, and certainly not written in any formula or pattern, it's a novel but at the same time it's a kind of historical-biographical-historical experiment.

Although it first appeared only in 1987 "Prison at Hanging Rock" is written in a deliberately mannered way so that it could stand pass as a contemporary record of the events it describes. Does poor treatment of the story attempt in any way to reproduce this mannered approach and to get, so to speak, on the inside of the events in the way the book does?

I really did try to write a literary script and as doing so I've attempted to get some echo of the style of the book. But then, of necessity, is confined mainly to the directions. The

dialogue has to be sharp and dramatic; it's impossible to use literary dialogue in this sort of situation and it would be very false to try. The audience won't read the directions of course, but I would like to think that retaining something of the original style in the script will influence the people involved in the film to work to some extent in this style.

You've got something of a reputation as a thorough researcher and I was wondering just how far beyond the book itself you went in assembling material for the screenplay?

I didn't go beyond the book at all, except to visit the locations. I razored the very strong temptation to research the basic story, my reasoning being that what I was working on was Jane Lindsay's book and not the events themselves.

Do you feel that in dealing with a specifically Australian topic like this one, while at the same time being part of a current, or moment, film in-

dustry, you're perhaps hampered by a self-consciousness that creative people elsewhere simply don't have to worry about?

I think that's still a real possibility for people hanging on the idea of doing the great thing, the definitive thing in their own field. This was a very prevalent attitude at one stage everyone was preparing the 'great Australian statement'. But I think that's been overcome now to a great extent.

Do you see that as a sign of maturity?

Yes, I think so. We set out now to make a good film, in our work involves a way to be as complete as, and if we got an outstanding film then that's a bonus. People realize now that it takes a lot of work to give you just a little cinema.

Looking at the same idea from, as it were, the other side of the screen, what part do you think self-consciousness is going to play in the responses of critics and audiences?

In the past this definitely weighed against us, but I think the wheel has turned now. It's always hard to try how critics are going to react, but I think our audiences are very aware about seeing themselves or their past truthfully and realistically represented on the screen. If you look back to what I said earlier on about the reception recorded recent ABC productions, there's a greater rationalism, a greater willingness to identify with the local product now, and this means that the old self-consciousness is on the wane. What we'll get, or hope, is a true, self-nationalism, with people more concerned about how good something is rather than about where it originated.

Inevitably — and I think this is a good thing — all our art forms, and cinema in particular, are going to be very much preoccupied with Australia for some time to come. But we're going to be looking at the thing from a great variety of angles and

we're not going to be after the definitive Australian poem, it'll be a matter of people with open ears of creative talent and emotions expressing what's close to them and what has meaning for them. And I believe the result will have meaning for their audience. It's vital that this country should have creatively, healthily, social media, this is an essential part of our whole range of cultural self-expression. But as it becomes more mixed, and more and more a natural reflection of what's around as it will become less and less prejudicial.

Returning to the more immediately personal side of things, could you give as a brief rundown on the projects you're involved in at the moment?

I'm doing a lot of TV work at present and finding it very satisfying. Television is moving into a very exciting phase just now it's becoming something of a writer's medium. This is a point the cinema hasn't reached and probably never will. I'm now working on two major television projects. *Power Without Glory* which I co-produced with Gary, and which I'm collaborating with several other writers, and a series of six one-hour TV plays based on some Henry Lawson stories I've been working on for a few years. In addition I've finished the first draft of a screenplay from David Martin's children's novel *Rapids*, although the project is in abeyance at the moment, for a number of reasons that I can't go into here. And the ABC has commissioned me to write another quartet of plays which again will be set in the country, but which will be quite different from *Macbeth*. They're set in the immediate future, actually, and they have to do with the beginning of a country-based right-wing coup, my feeling is that I've got to get them written down soon before I'm overtaken by events. ■

CREDITS

TV Event Series
Headline (1986), Two episodes produced by Crawford Productions.
Midnight Patrol (1979/81) Six episodes produced by Crawford Productions.
The Spies (1977) Two episodes produced by Crawford Productions.
Henry Lawson (1979) Synopsis of 12 Behind the Screen ABC.
Macbeth in Angkor (1978) Synopsis of "The Norman Lindsay Festival". Produced by Richard Leno.
The Film and Film of William Shaw (1974) One episode. Produced by the ABC.
Back (1984) Two episodes produced by the ABC.
Plus numerous shortlisted and children's productions.
TV Film
Macbeth: A Quarter (1973) Produced by the ABC. Adapted from (1974).
Norman Lindsay (1974) Produced by the ABC.
Big Blue (1974) Produced by the ABC.
Light on Eagle Plains (1974) Produced by Crawford Productions.
Prison on the Edge (1973) Produced by the ABC.
The Last Pages of Charles (1971) Produced by the ABC. Adapted from (1972).
James Joyce (1972) Produced by the ABC.
Shilling (1972) With Anne Breckinridge, Tim Austin, Angus Wright, (1971) AFI. Adapted from (1972).
Who's Your Friend? (1972) (Richard Leno Film Productions, in production).
TV Series *Power Without Glory*, Lawson's fiction.
Norman Lindsay Festival at Hanging Rock, Angkor.



THE FIRST
ADULT WHO
RATED Z

THE ERGYR
ADVENTURES OF

ZORRO

AN ENTERTAINMENT
VENTURES INC.
PRODUCED BY
JIM HENSON

Film censorship can **STILL** be heavy.

By ANTHONY J. GINNANE

Film censorship as a controversy is not much of an issue in Australia 1974 with only hard-core offerings like *David Is Male* *Jesus and Deep Throat* still on the total banned list, and standards generally as to soft and medium-core material, provided the right 'construction' is agreed as by the censor, becoming more liberal day by day. But every now and then something happens which points out to us rather sharply that the basic machinery of censorship can still be as repressive as ever.

Some eight volume inches in the Melbourne Star of October 12 mentioned what proved to be an event without precedent: script lost the last 23 years. The *Events Advertiser* of *Zorro* a Gorman-American soft 'X' exploiter produced by audio operator David Friedman, passed with an 'R' and out by the Film Censorship Board and in release at the Melbourne Chelsea and Sydney Gaiety some five weeks, had had its certificate of registration revoked and had been taken off the screen.

Confusion reigned as to what had happened. Somehow or other the second, third and fourth prints of the film imported into Australia by Regent Trading Enterprises head Enrol Hauch had arrived from the censor's head room intact and the prints that had been screening in Melbourne and Brisbane were completely contrary to the Film Censorship Board's Certificate's rating requirements. This is not the first time this has happened and this winter known personality of at least one and possibly two other movies released in Melbourne where this has happened, but *Zorro* was the first to be caught out. Deputy Chief Censor Mrs Strickland advised that the Board had acted as a result of numerous complaints from the public as to the film's content, but refused to say whether the number of complaints received was more or less than normal for exploitation films - *spoiler*. Enrol Hauch, who is an exhibitor as far as independent distribution goes and has had his eye on with the Censor's back in the bad old days, blames insufficiency within the Attorney-General's

Department for the *breakdown* (and it is well known that the inhabitants of the Imperial Academy basement are not noted for either their efficiency or their consistency), but also informed sources suggested that this might be the work of the establishment getting back at Hauch for his handling of the controversial *See Adam & How To Use Them* and for his blazes at the kangaroo sport Queensland Film Board of Review, both publicly at the recent Annual Exhibitors' Convention and in the pages of the trade paper *Australian Cinema*.

The affidavit of *Julia Feteries* known *quidam* is headed by a self-proclaimed Brisbane solicitor named *Exquisite*. It was submitted in hearing *Zorro* in Queensland on Friday, September 13. The Queensland Board meets in total secrecy, gives no reasons for its decisions and guarantees its decisions within hours giving distributor and exhibitor little time to attempt otherwise programming. The only option open to an aggrieved distributor is an expensive appeal to the Queensland Supreme Court or a mutually agreeable reconstruction (it's cutting) of the film which may produce a version quite different to that screened elsewhere in Australia (How's that for freedom of trade between the states: Senator Murphy, situation please).

Late on Monday, October 14 the matter appeared to be resolved. The exact prints of *Zorro* had been cut and the Melbourne Chelsea was screening it once more. I have yet to see the cut print, but I saw the uncut print and found it far from being anything in the way of a notable censorship breakthrough. Strange to say on the Friday prior to the announcement of the *Zorro* ban I had viewed the *Morrison Frankenstein* which has been passed intact and which contains some of the most revolting scenes of sadism-misogynism ever seen on the screen. Even the Board now sleep in infernal torpor in that a *Morrison* film is somehow immune from the rigours of film that a piece of 'Z' grade porn like

Zorro must face. Haven't *Prowse* and Co. heard of prudishness?

Whether Queensland will now reconsider its ban in the face of the federal ruling remains to be seen. Purists may argue that not many teams should be split over the fate of a film like *Zorro*, but it is the principle that is important. The total arbitrariness of the Queensland Board is obvious. The Federal Board in its action of pulling off a film at a moment's notice is just as arbitrary.

Moreover the powers of the Federal Board of Review have not been spotlighted sufficiently at law. This group composed over also of public servants, TV commentators and academics have evidence for a reconsideration of the decisions of the Board at first instance; then make no decision, after private discussion. It gives no reasons for its decisions, (only most Australian quasi-judicial tribunals, unlike in England where detailed reasons must be given) and its decisions (save for the little used appeal to the Attorney-General) is final. One major area of censorship reform long overdue must be for both the Board and the Board of Review to have to give detailed reasons for their decisions.

Finally Deputy Chief Censor Strickland made the interesting point that had either the exhibitor or distributor in the *Zorro* case refused to take off the movie, Commonwealth Customs action for prohibited imports would not be (despite the delegation of customs powers by the State's Attorney-General to the Commonwealth) but that the individual State Attorneys-General would have to take their own action under the Summary Offences Act of each state and related legislation.

This time may well come when a distributor or exhibitor may well feel that a County Court jury would be more qualified to express an opinion on the offensiveness or otherwise of a movie than a gaggle of Melbourne-based censors wading under infallibility from a Sydney basement. ■



Scott Murray

WERNER HERZOG

:interview

WERNER HERZOG: I try to make films because I know that I have some sort of vision or insight. The Swedish film is really like a terrifying nightmare, and I know that sort of nightmare is what most people I consider prove it but I somehow know it. It is some sort of subconscious knowledge and I know that with this film I was the one to articulate it. I can demonstrate it and all of a sudden it becomes transparent to others. It is very, very simple why I make films. For example when you have a very strong dream at night, the next morning you want to tell your husband or your friend about it. When I make a film I try to articulate, and I know I can do it so therefore I do it.

When you are making a film do you make concessions for an audience, or do you make it the only way you can? I do not have much choice, that's for sure. I have only a very limited choice because if I couldn't make films I don't know what else I could do. Filmmaking is just something for hysteria, I think. While making a film I see it so clearly that I try to give as close as possible to my directing of it. What I see is a landscape I try to find it in reality, and that's initial work. Filmmaking turns into life and it becomes something independent. I like to see my prints and I like to carry them around although it is very hard because they are 35 kilos and the string cuts your hand.

One of the guests at the 1974 Perth Film Festival was the brilliant young German director Werner Herzog. Five of his major films were shown: *Signs of Life*, *Even Dwarfs Started Small*, *Fata Morgana*, *Land of Silence and Darkness* and *Aguirre, the Wrath of God*.

When asked for whom he made films, Herzog once replied: "For leaping bullfrogs and dazed dromedaries." Given this reluctance to discuss the intentions of his films, the following interview, conducted by Scott Murray, concerns itself with personal reflections on many of his films and a general discussion of his approach to directing.

But I like to feel the weight of it, that pressure, and I know I can get out of it because I can just leave it on the ground and walk away. This I can come back and know it is somewhere else, maybe in Mexico, and it is a good feeling to know it. This is one of the reasons I like T.V. because it poses on one night and that's it. It is so good to know while shooting a film that some of your films are being shown in England or Algeria. They have got independent somehow. I am a film very clearly before I make it, so it is no problem at all to write a script. I can write as fast as I can type, so it takes me two or maybe three days to do.

Do you do your own editing?

Yes, I would try as I do my own camerawork as well but I am not the cameraman, because I tell him very clearly what I want to have in the shot, I did the editing of my short

films alone, but with features it is something different. I work with an editor, an ingenious lady who has edited all the films of Alexander Kluge, and Kluge would be a nothing, a shadow of himself if he hadn't had that woman. She is really a genius and she has an instinct for material. When working in an editing room for two months you have to keep a distance between yourself and the material, you must become a nothing, I not so many films when I am conscious that the director has an intuition with the material. They try and force it into a shape and it is an awkward feeling. When I edit a film it becomes an absolute zero. I just look at it as if I had found it in the street. I try to find out what the material is about, how has it developed and how has it gained its own life. Sometimes there are things

* Best Movie-Johannes

in the material which you hadn't seen before, and you only can see it when you have graduated yourself and become a nothing.

Do you do much editing in the camera?

I always do have it in mind. In my last film I usually had four camera scenes without any interruption. If I want to go closer for some details I shoot it again because then I have the possibility to shorten it later. However if the long take by itself does not work, the scene would not work even if you went from detail to detail to detail.

You said that material sometimes gets its own life.

Yes. It's a certain instinct for the material itself. I really know how to make a film and the technique to use, but sometimes I refuse to use them when I see that there is something in the film which is more important than my skills about it. It's about sincerity also. I never take it seriously what I am or what I have to do with a film because I know the film is something that is beyond me, something which has more importance than my private life. I do not care about being imprisoned in Africa, I really do not care, it's not important. The only important thing is when you see it on the screen and then I know that whatever I have made, some of it will survive me.

Do you spend much time seeing other people's films?

No, I wouldn't say so and I do not know many filmmakers. I work quite alone but I am very, very deeply impressed by other films. It is the biggest foundation of my life. When I sit in the movies it is some sort of deconstructed form of life. I am not so much shaped or struggled as by sitting in the movies.

Do you think your style has been influenced by any other filmmakers in particular?

I wouldn't think so. For example one of the filmmakers I like most is Michel and he made films between 1904-16. Griffith for me is the greatest ever but he cannot be mentioned any more. It's like Shakespeare or John Sebastian. Look, look, you saw all of Griffith's work and I thought I would drop dead when I saw *Broken Blossoms* because it is so good. I also like an Indian filmmaker very much, Satyajit Ray, and I like Kurosawa's work and some of Truffaut's. *Last Year's The Mother & The Whore* is a great film, as important film. It's so far from any sort of filmmaking but I truly know, again I am sure I have an absolute knowledge that this film will give experience and weight in the next decade. It's the most concentrated human into what we are like now, a magic document of our time. In 2020 it will be even more important than now. It is a truly important film, please don't miss that. I don't like Russian films, especially Pavlovsky. I have seen *Sigma* over Asia maybe five times, but it can't be reached any more. It is such a film. Also Donchenko's *Earth*. You can put these filmmakers, just leave him, he is not like Eisenstein much, he is so much better and he has too much construction in his films. I think he is over-rated as a filmmaker but see Donchenko's *Earth*. It's incredible, I tell you it's absolutely incredible. That film has become a part of myself, so if another arm or leg.

Do you ever use the camera to create an effect?

Yes I do, because sometimes it is necessary. Because in somehow the creation of an effect.

In *"Fata Morgana"*, there are a couple of scenes when you use very fast movements and it is a relief when it stops. It is sort of aggressive. Is this what you were trying to do or did it just happen that way?

No there is something different to it. With extensive movements of the camera, there is some sort of sense of escape which cannot be really explained in words. It was very interesting for me to learn that Gorbunov gave an instruction to all German cameramen during the Second World War that the German soldiers must stay in the film from left to right, whether they were going to Russia or France. It is also true in the commercials about new Ford Mustangs, they came from left to right. Why? For example I saw one reception which really struck me. It was about a Toyota pick-up truck



and that truck comes through rough country from right to left, it lights it very very slowly but it makes it. There is some sort of sense that the movement of soldiers, for example, from left to right looks victorious. There are thoughts, that maybe it could have to do with our handwriting, but that some time few weeks with Arabs and then write the other way. So what? Nobody can really explain it. For example in the *Dwarfs* film the dwarfs break open a garage and open the engine of a car which they let out or just something for the rest of the film without any driver at all. There is a lot of action in the foreground and somewhere in the background you see that car and it is always reversed, you feel it most of the time or something else happens because you consider clockwise. And it goes the other way around you wouldn't have seen it after 15 minutes. I know that, I really know that. It is some sort of inner law of making things visible and it is not that I go to a landscape and just around, I really have things in mind. I don't landscape, and I direct animals in my films. You can see that in all my films. It is signs of life. I suppose a law, in the *Dwarfs* film I have a small deer, an antelope, I direct animals and I claim that you can direct landscapes as well, to a certain extent of course.

Was there any particular reason why you chose the music of Leonard Cohen for *"Fata Morgana"*?

Well, I didn't plan to use Leonard Cohen at all, and if you had told me before that I would, I would have said "You are insane." But somehow it works. An image from the center doesn't change when you put music on it because the physical aspect of it is the same all the time, even if you show it a hundred times. But we found there are certain

qualities in an image, a certain atmosphere that you can use better when you have music with it. It changes the perspective of the audience and all of a sudden you see that, it's, for example, a sad landscape, or with the desert that it's a terrible landscape. That's what I know after seeing the material five or ten times on the movie. I knew that it had a certain quality which couldn't be seen instantly but you can see right away with that music — you get it precisely. The music to some extent is a contradiction of what you see and somehow there is a tension between music and images and all of a sudden it makes things transparent which you wouldn't see right away.

Is that what you did in *"Eros Dwarfs Started Small"*?

Yes, exactly the same process. Sometimes the music works against the images, sometimes it works with it but mostly against it and this is for making it more transparent. It is very hard for me to explain in words because it is beyond verbal description but I always know when I've used the right music. It's an absolute knowledge for me. It's not a mathematical knowledge but some sort of intuitive knowledge. I am very sure about that.

I saw that film a couple of years ago and I still remember the music. I think it was a holy magic.

Yes it was a thirteen-year-old girl. I wrote the music myself. I shot that film on a Canary Island, on a great barren volcanic island and there are folk songs there that are very similar to that. It picked a girl of thirteen years and she could sing so beautifully that she thought she would sing her lungs out of her body. I had her sing in a cave, in a natural cave half the size of that room. And then it about a man as well. It is a big choir of about a

thousand people singing which I recorded in Africa on the Ivory Coast. I went there because there is an African who claims to be the Messiah, to be Jesus Christ. He has a flock of people around him and the flock follows him everywhere. There is a little God. Some that he has created there, and they have built a huge cathedral on sand. His preaching and deep wonders there, and for the people he is Jesus Christ. We went there on Sundays when they have big ceremonies. They sing those songs in the church and I recorded them because I knew it was for the *Dwarfs* film. That was all, there was no deliberation.

Could we pursue some things like language, in *"Fata Morgana"* and *"Land of Silence and Darkness"* it almost seems as if you yourself doubt rhetoric or poetic words.

Yes, it's true. *Land of Silence & Darkness* is a very clear example. In all my films there is some sort of need to fight the terrible difficulty to make oneself understood and that conceptual motion. *Land of Silence and Darkness* is about the sense to make yourself understood.

What would you say if somebody suggested that in *"Fata Morgana"* you are almost disgusted by human beings?

Yes to some extent, because of what they have done. "Paradise" is a very cruel aspect of things and somehow I only want to show, for me to see it, and so for it to be straight on and stark naked.

"Eros Dwarfs Started Small" seems your most desperate film?

Yes. I shot it with a certain sort of cynicism. It took me one year almost to feel them and one year almost to feel them and one year almost to feel them. It is the sort of education. I don't know if it is a different. Maybe it is more important, and they are showing and for me beautiful people. The thing which is distorted and monstrous in the film are the objects because they are so normal. For example the motor cycle all of a sudden turns to be a monster, and it is not only the motor cycle, it is the sort of education they get, it's the table is wrong, the religious teaching. All of a sudden you realize that it's a monstrously and that our life is a monstrously because we can't walk for a quarter of a mile without hitting a wall, without hearing a regulation, or a policeman. It is a very desperate sort of a film. Maybe there is a certain quality which is very hard to describe, they somehow seem to me as if they are a consciousness of what we are as human beings. For example there is a scene at the end where the smallest child, who is only 20 feet tall, stands in front of a doorway which is breaking on its front knee with its arms and legs, and it is a very painful and massive, from that physical position and the smallest dwarf almost laughs his soul out of his body. If you were to come three days later I think he would still have been standing there laughing. That laughter for me in the laughter, it's a



concentration of all possible human laughter. It's a more satisfying thing.

In the last shot of "Agnes" the camera just keeps drifting. In "Signs of Life" there is a fly clicking inside a window and, well, no focus. Are there any symbolic touches?

I just do them. After seeing all my films within one week, which happened just recently, I found out all of a sudden that it was a common sort of movie. Like in *Signs of Life* there is a gypsy king in search of his people and they are running after each other in some sort of circle. They also talk about processions of wood parades which walk in processions, hundreds of thousands all lined up. They talk about defecating the first one so that it has the tail of the last one so they would endlessly walk in circles until they dropped dead. It is easy to take a chicken and put it over so that it has an eye back. Then from its back you draw a line with a piece of chalk and it may become hypodermic in that position, legs stretched up into the air for half an hour. It is just incredible, really funny. In *Kind Dwarfs* I started making this type of odd films again. You see that very explicitly in the scene where the straight line gets caught up and take the eye out. For the rest of the film it is sticking around in the corner just without any drive at all and it's terrible because it is so desperate, there is no way out. Somehow the people in some of my films are caught up by human error, which they can't break out of, maybe with the exception of short videos.

However in your films so far there is one that's sort like able to escape. They either go mad like in "Signs of Life", or they are left alone on a raft, defeated but dreaming of future conquests. Some people would claim that it's a terribly pessimistic view. Do you see it in that way?

Well it might be, but I wouldn't say it is too pessimistic. Maybe the end of the *Dwarfs* film is pessimistic because there is no way out and it dwells on a horrifying landscape and a screaming face in the sky. I'd say it is quite desperate, but yet it seems to me as if it was the only really good thing these madmen ever had, and so it was worthwhile for them. It was a really joyful day destroying everything and tearing this up inside down.

Oh it's really on the edge though. Like these two who go into the bedroom and can't get up on the bed.

Yeah, the men can't climb onto the bed because it is too high for him. Well you know these films are quite personal and somehow it gets through what I suffer from.

You said earlier that your films are sensitive in the way you do things. Earlier in your filmmaking did you build up a body of knowledge, or did you always have confidence that you would cut and re-cut and expose an idea the way it had to be?

Yes, of course. For example I never wanted to be assistant and I never went to a film school. I was so con-

stant that I started very early with 35 mm short films. I can tell you how I started. When I was in high school I used to work on an assembly line doing welding jobs. I did that for two years, from eight o'clock at night till six o'clock in the morning and during school I slept. In the afternoons I prepared my films, and that's how I started. But I was quite serious, I didn't even miss the question of whether I was fit to do it or not. I just did it. I didn't have the privilege to choose my profession.

What do you think of filmmaking careers in Universities?

You can learn the technical side of filmmaking in 40 hours, all the rest is not necessary. The rest you can learn only while making films. I do not really think film schools. I don't know one single filmmaker of importance who has come out of one. You should go on and just do it. When you are writing a novel what do you do next, what sort of teaching or learning do you need? It requires that you master how to type what you can learn in 40 hours also. If you know that you can write a novel, all the rest you do yourself. Maybe I am too modest because I am very much self-made and therefore I have an inclination to say that you should drop your courses and go out and start a camera, start some film material and make a film. If you have a good idea there you have every right in the world to start a camera, or monkey, or whatever it is to you need. I saw at my hotel many cameras just lying around because the Russian filmmaker didn't have the hotel, and they could have made a film in that time. I always get confused when I see cameras like this, they camera, and I think there is a certain right to start a camera one day. It is inappropriate. I don't say that to suggest for better, I really mean it. It is some sort of vanity and doesn't have anything to do with ideology. If you need one to breathe and you are locked in a room, you have to take a shovel and hammer and break down the wall. It's your right.

Do you deliberately choose a subject?

How can I say it? For example I never make any plan about what to do, at just once, like as if an apple fell on me from a tree. It's as if you dream but it's strange because if you don't dream at all. Not at all, maybe once in two years I am in a completely dreamless period. But I have very clear sorts of dreams. When I walk, for example, while working on a long one, or when I dance a curfew for a long distance it's as if I was in a movie all the time. I do not even realize that I dream a lot, but let's say 1,000 times. As if I was in a novel. So strange things occur.

How difficult was it to get your last feature, "Signs of Life," off the ground?

It was my first feature film. I had done short films before. I wrote the script when I was 20 or 21 and it took me three years to get the filmers together. We are trained to me-



Life as a World Avenue here as seen in *Signs of Life*.

because I was so young and they didn't believe that I was able to make that film. Years before when I was 16 I had written a script and submitted it to a company which accepted it. I wrote letters to them and made a written contract. They thought I was old or something like that and when I wanted to see and read up some it was all finished. That's one of the reasons why I became a producer myself. It was a sheer necessity because I was too young to be trusted. It's just a shame of the years of humiliation, stress and defeat. What I am right now is the product of my failures, I am just made by failure.

"Signs of Life" came from a short story, didn't it?

No, not really. There is a short story written about 150 years ago by a German writer Alke von Alken which was based on an incident recorded in a German newspaper in 1805. For a time I was very much interested in questions of military theory and I studied a lot about war history. I had this report in a newspaper about an incident in the Seven Years War where a guy became insane and looked himself up in a tower. He had gunshot wounds around himself and fought off friends and enemies. I only found out later that it was on the same subject that Alke's story was written. It doesn't have anything to do with it, but it's a beautiful story because it starts very interesting. An old man who was wounded in the Seven Years War and who has now a wooden leg, reports the story as he gets by a fireplace. When he tells the story he gets so absorbed that he doesn't realize that his leg catches fire. It's a beautiful story. But to do the film was quite complicated because I started shooting only two or three weeks after the military takeover in Germany in 1967, and the authorities and town majors were so afraid of the Colonels that they really didn't dare allow anything at all. My participants would suddenly become arrested overnight and we really had to force our way through it. It was terri-

ble at that time, but there are always anastrophes in my films.

Did the winning of a prize for the first feature at Berlin help in financing your next ones?

No, I wouldn't say so. That prize of the Silver Bear at the Berlin Film Festival in just a silver bear. I spent it was kullow much because I used all the bear to make an arbitrage out of it but it was not before after all. So I was disappointed. However that same year during the Festival the National Film Award was given to me and that's not only a handshake by the Minister of Interior Affairs, it is also a lot of money. I received 350,000 Deutschmark which is really a bit of a lot of money. It was not for me personally, I had to spend it as my own film and that's how the *Dwarfs* film was made. It's a relatively good system of German film. In Germany you also can submit a script in some sort of competition and a committee selects three or four of the 400 submitted. You can receive an award of 200,000 Deutschmark which is \$410,000 and that's quite a lot. I also received that award for my last film. Every time for *Kind Dwarfs* and *God Against All odds* for *Agnes*. That was a lot of help, you can really then start the financing of a film.

What have the critics here said? Have they been sufficient on Germany, or do you have to depend on world sales?

It is more world sales. In Germany I am rather unknown. The *Dwarfs* film didn't have any importance at all as Germany as only a very few cinemas showed it, and I had to rent most of them myself because the film was banned. *Signs of Life* had a lot of very beautiful screens but no one went to see it. I've always found it less difficult in other countries, but it is slowly getting better and *Signs of Life* now has bigger audiences than five years ago. It is promising very, very slowly, and one thing which is really strange to all people normally don't ask for one of my films, but ask my *Agnes* or *Signs of Life*, but ask

For most of them, I found the same thing here at the Paris Film Festival: people prefer to have their art and somehow they fit together. It's like a family name, you always want to see a little bit more.

If we can move on to "Fata Morgana". Would you say it is a more personal film than, say "Aguirre"?

I wouldn't say, though *Aguirre* has one thing which is not so personal: I tried to make it out of personal files. I took the form of documentary story but gave it a new sort of lifting full of new meanings and new strains. *Fata Morgana* I made absolutely open to everything and I sound away my script, the very first day of shooting, and I let things come out. It was like a dream, a hallucination. It was strange because I thought people wouldn't like the film and they would find it very peculiar and would laugh at it so I wanted to keep it a secret all the time. I planned to send it only to my best friend before I died and then he would lend it over to his best friend before he died and so on. However the film was tricked out of my hands after two years of hiding it by Louis Ligner and Henry Langdon. They just didn't handle the price back, they gave it to the Quatuor des Realisateurs in Cannes and so it must show. I think it's alright now that the film is being shown and strongly enough people like it, most of the people like it.

It's a very accessible film though you'd think it probably wouldn't be.

It is unprecedented to some extent and I think the really good thing about the film is that it was made at all. It's not a film like a dream and it's a very valuable sort of film. It's hard to explain. I always try to have some sort of inner light shining through the story itself, a necessary sort of inner light. In *Signs of Life* there is an incredible shot with 15,000 windows and it is something very deep inside you and all of a sudden you see it and it becomes transparent vision. It's sacred to fit was a dream. In *Fata Morgana* we look away all the story and just find of many images, it was one of the more motives to show the other side.

What are some of the images because it is difficult to tell them apart from other images?

You may remember there is a bus which stops and people walk out of it. It is very strange because it looks as if the bus was swimming on a lake, and the people are just like people in an exaggerated, stretched form. They do not walk they just drift apart and drift together again. I think therefore for a moment it was a road, but it was only the mirror reflections of a bus which was maybe 100 or 300 miles away. We went there by car, thinking it was only a mile away, but we went for 800 miles and there was absolutely nothing, not even the track of the bus. It was really incredible.

Can you give some idea of the footage you had when you experienced these images?

Yeah, it is so great that you are like a constant dream. A big dream like the Sahara is not only a form of landscape, it is a form of life. That sort of solitude and silence. The people of it are totally silent and you have to have been exposed to it to understand it. There is always that sort of mirage around you as if it was another planet. It is just incredible and I think there is nothing in the world like the Sahara.

Did you shoot all of it in the Sahara?

No, some parts were shot in Uganda and that Africa. For example at the end there's an aeroplane flying over a ravine lake which looks like a strange structure. For example there is one scene shot from an aeroplane where the ground looks like that, but it is not pink colour but 10 million floodings down there. But you can't distinguish that.

Were most of these shots done from aeroplanes, like the one through the sand dunes at the beginning?

That's not an aeroplane, that's a sort of a road we built. For ten days we dug through the sand and we had a very smooth road, and then we mounted the camera on top of the car. I drove the car because it was very important how fast it went, the rhythm of the travelling shot. It was such a lot of hell you wouldn't imagine. We went during the hottest season because you can expect more *Fata Morgana*, more images at that time. The Sahara at that time is closed down and you can't go north through it because they don't allow it. We went anyway. There was a sandstorm which took us eight days to recover from, and we ran into the sand dunes in the southern Sahara and that's the worst of all. In Uganda we were terrorized and the material was confiscated. We returned to the Sahara but were arrested in Algeria. For filming without permission. We were arrested several times in Cameroon on charges of being mercenaries. There was a strong coup which had failed and the police and military forces maintained their power by sheer terror. Unfortunately the cameramen had almost the same experience as German auxiliary leaders who were condemned to death in Algeria and they thought they had grabbed him when they got us. They really scared us badly. I have got beyond them all over my body from where they tortured me. Nobody ever will know what sort of hell *Fata Morgana* was, and so you can see how important the film was for me.

How rapidly was "When Death Sealed Bambi" scripted?

I had a script which was the basic story. One thing was changed during shooting and a lot of the dialogue was made up on set. I have tended more and more to write scripts without any dialogue. My last script is like a prose text, but it very poetically describes what you see, how people move and what they do. Of all my films so far, *Bambi* is the most naked and direct.

Do you think that is one of the

reasons why it was banned in Germany?

No there are other reasons. I mean Bambi, for example, violence, anarchy, things like that. To tell the whole story there was an appeal and it was refused without a single vote so I am now free to show it everywhere in Germany, but for a time I really had trouble with that film and I was even threatened with murder for a time when I showed it in March. I was called up every night between threat and fear in the morning by people who told me ugly things.

Where did you get the idea for "Aguirre"?

Well it was relatively strange how the idea originated. I looked through a book at a friend's house and there was among some of the children's books one of adventures and discoveries, an *Aguirre*, Aztec, Aztec, Aztec and people like that. Incidentally I saw about 15 lines of text on a strange Spanish *Conquistador* *Aguirre* *Aguirre* who called himself the "Wrath of God" and who led a large expedition into the Aztec jungle in search of El Dorado. He proclaimed as his people as the new emperor of El Dorado and discredited King Philip II of Spain in a mock battle. That really intrigued me so I started to write the script the very next day. There is a funny detail about it because at the time I was playing in a German soccer team and we went to Austria as a bus. By the time we were about 120 km from Munich we suddenly decided to drop it and they started and sang obscene songs. I sat for two days at that bus with a typewriter on my knees while they vomited around me. I wrote the script within those two days. Then I tried to raise the money because I had to produce it myself and it was really a hell of a lot of trouble.

How much did you have to raise?

Well I would say I had to raise maybe \$1 million to make that film but I ended up with about \$120,000-\$150,000, so I had to decide whether to do it on that money or not. We finally made it but please do not risk how we made it, it was really terrible. We had to do such a much pressure, the pressure of finance and the pressure of nature. You shouldn't forget that we shot the film right in the heart of the Aztec jungle with no villages around. Nothing at all around but snakes and spiders and people. It was just incredible the time and we crossed the line of legality. At the end we were that far. In driving down the river and nobody was able except the leader who insured power. Then 370 monkeys were let the fall and take over. We shot the monkeys because we couldn't pay for them. We went to Iguala Airport where there are weekly airplanes to the United States for American passengers and we threatened to be mercenaries. We asked for documents of vaccination but they had none so we decided at the Customs pay still be unloaded the whole aeroplane and put direct in our truck so we could take the monkeys and give them the proper

vacination. So we just took off with them. We did a lot of things like that, even worse.

Did you release the monkeys back to the forest?

Well we brought them back but they stayed on you can see in the film. They got in a panic, jumped overboard and went to the river bank. Half of the monkeys just left. I liked the monkeys and I liked to have them just swim away but we were only two days' trip away from Iguala and people know about it and where we were and I was afraid of police trouble — it's a military regime there — could have great trouble if we hadn't brought back the rest of the monkeys so we did. We said they all got stuck but only half survived. They didn't believe it.

How much time did you spend researching in Peru beforehand?

Not too much. I wrote the script in Germany and I had described the landscapes and now so precisely that I didn't have any choice, it had to be like this and it was. I was there for three months to organize it. There was a big problem because I wanted to have the expedition pass through rapids on some raft, and those Aztec tribesmen have some very spectacular rapids but they're too dangerous for 300 people passing through with cameras and a horse. So I went down most of the main Amazon tributaries and found some canyons rapids on the Huallaga River which wasn't too dangerous, but still still quite dangerous as you can see in the film. If you see a shipwreck in a Hollywood film you can see that they did it in their backroom, but in this film you can see it's real, authentic danger.

Did you have many problems with the authorities in Peru?

No, not really — not like the trouble with the authorities in Greece when I made *Signs of Life*. In Peru it was relatively easy because there's a left-wing military regime there which is very strange. Usually military regimes have a tendency to be reactionary and fascist, but in Peru these people are really straight and they liked the project. They gave documents their own part, don't interfere with what they were formed as had had. They like their Indian heritage and the film was so much in favour of the Indians and against the Spanish. Some Indians here, they liked it in the jungle itself. It's a complete atrocity, it's not governed at all and every man does what he likes because there are no outsiders around. People are in their hammocks on the river bank and they watch the current pass by indifferently. That's all they do, life like in a coma. Beautiful, it's really beautiful.

Where exactly did you shoot?

I shot the film on three main locations, all outside. We finally used the Rio Uchiremba which is really wild, a really incredible river. We continued on the Rio Huallaga where we shot the rapids, and ended up on the Rio Nariay which is close



The children's ignorance holds one of the director's comedy inadvertently creating a production and giving them the biggest day of their life to happen in the lowland Amazon jungle. From the first to the last river it was a distance of 1,200-1,300 miles, so you can imagine it was a really big transportation problem. There was a fourth major location but I had to forget about it. I wanted to start the film on a 13,000 foot high glacier in the Peruvian Andes and the first shot was going to be of 400 pigs who are behaving like drunken pigs because of the altitude. Then when the camera moved away you saw that there were 1,000 people as less behind them as if it was a vineyard of pigs. I had tents made in Austria for getting pigs drunk. We gave them a certain kind of shot and they really behaved like mad, like the worst hobos. But in the end I couldn't go to the glacier because it was so high that I think half of the people involved wouldn't have made it.

How did you organize the opening shots which are still quite devastating? They must have been terribly difficult to organize.

Yes, very difficult. Most of the organization is athlete's work. Let me explain it to you. There was a footpath carved into a almost vertical rock which was up for about 800

meters above the Urubamba River which the Incas had made. It was terrible to climb because it was always slippery and I ran up and down it at least four times instructing every single person precisely what to do. I did not use megaphones or things like that, so it's really some sort of athletic exercise. I always say that any one of my films is not something in my head, it is something that comes out of my muscles. I like to have a real body feeling for things I direct. For example I built a raft myself.

How many rafts did you have?

At the end on the Rio Manay we had I think 14 rafts, really big ones with sort of houses on them, Indian type houses or poles and with thatched roofs and hammocks inside. We also had one raft just for the kitchen. We used to float down the river during the day, the shooting raft about a mile ahead so we would shoot a few hours of the river ahead of the rest. At noon we would tie it onto some branches on the river bank and wait for the kitchen raft and floating village to arrive. It was a beautiful thing to do, but only afterwards can I say that it was beautiful. At the time it was terrible.

Is this difficulty important for you? A lot of your films are made on difficult locations.

Like the Sahara and Canary Islands. Well it's true, but I wouldn't say I like it. I would really prefer to make a film like my last one, *Every Man for Himself* and *God Against All*, in Germany. That was the first film I made in Germany, apart from *Land of Silence and Darkness*, but I made the first Indian film. I really would like to make all my films in Germany but there is no people around, so not Indian or things like that. Yet after all the shooting I've done so far I have found that shooting under a certain amount of pressure and uncertainty brings a lot of life into a film. It forces real life, genuine life into the film.

You can certainly get that feeling in "Aguirre". How did you do those shots circling the raft, particularly the one at the end? They look like helicopter shots.

Yes I wanted to have it as smooth as a helicopter but there are no helicopters in the Amazon area. The Andes are 15,000-16,000 feet high and a helicopter can't cross there. So we had a speed boat approaching the

raft very, very fast and then circling around it, slowing down a little bit and circling around again. You can imagine that it was very difficult to do so, and we had to practice for a very long time, many days. When you slow a boat down your own waves will overtake you, so when you already around you have to cut through your own wake and the image begins to shake. To avoid that we had to deflect our waves to a certain degree and that's really difficult to do. It was a head-bald camera by the way.

It's incredibly smooth. In fact the head-held camera work throughout the whole film is excellent.

The cameraman Thomas Misch received the National Film Award for Aguirre. He had deserved it for years and years, like for *Sighe of Life* and the *Death Film*. Everything he did as his life deserved it and now when it was by far too late they give it to him.

Where did you find that beautiful man who plays the Shast?

Maybe I should explain that I have dedicated the film to that Indian flute player. I found him by accident in the market place of Cusco playing

his faith and discipline are a lot out. He was literally insane and he didn't know even his name as everybody called him *Hombocato* which means "little man." I asked him to come along with us to participate in the shooting but he refused. He told me that if he left Cusco all the people would die. Finally we more or less tricked him into coming with us, and he was like a saint. Nobody wanted to stay on the same stuff with him because at night he stayed in his pants, but he was so soft and sweet. A strange thing about him was that even in the heat of the Amazon jungle, he wore three thick woolen sweaters as one of each other. He didn't like to take them off so I always had to take it him for one or two hours to get him to remove them. He was so afraid that people would steal his sweaters that we gave him a plastic bag and he hid them senseless in the jungle. After the shooting finished all the team had to spread out and dig because he couldn't remember the place where he had hidden them. I met him again after the shooting in Cusco and he had brought three jackets with his salary. I went up to and asked, "Hombocato why do you wear three jackets out of each other?" He turned round to me and whispered, "To keep out the bad breath of the gringos."

That's a very beautiful thing where you held on his after he has finished playing.

Yes, you see how much he is.

He has such a beautiful face.

Oh yes. He's the only saint I know, a real saint.

What about *Kira Kira*?

It's a real comedy. *Kira Kira* is well known to be the most difficult story in the world. He has broken so many contracts that nobody ever dared to make a full-length film with him, with the exception of Corbucci who used him in a western. Anyway *Kira Kira* is hardly unique. For example, I've recently to discover that such a man can stay with a woman around. That man was in hospital for three months in a coma. Every where *Kira Kira* goes he causes scandal, he even sets his total record on fire. Once he tossed a candlestick with eight burning candles into the audience and he pulled himself in the airport so as not to hear the applause, but there was only loss. Absolutely no profit. There was an incident before we started shooting when, because of an insurance question, we had to go to a physician and have it checked up. One of the questions was, "Mr. *Kira Kira* do you have, at any job ever have, fit of any kind?" So he shouted, "Yes!" at the highest pitch and shouted, "every day." Then he climbed up a glass table in front of him and began to smash up all of this physician's office. It was really too much. I took two men and one came to calm him down. Really it was a struggle to rope with him because every day he would insult and humiliate me. He would shout, "You are just a dwarf's director" and it was very funny because I kept doubly



Agapito (Chico Riqui) and his young daughter from the last episode of *Agapito, the Wrath of God*.

what. I very calmly and calmly looked at him and the Indians were so scared that they huddled together. At the end of the film one chief told me, "We were so scared, not of *Kira Kira* who was yelling and behaving like a madman, but of you because you were so silent." Well I really want so far that I threatened to kill him. He wanted to break the contract and take off and I wouldn't permit it. If he had taken off I would have blown six bullets through his head before he had reached the next end of the road, and he really knew that. And it was so funny because he was so scared that he started to scream for help.

The Americanized dubbing is very bad and distracting.

Yes, the dubbing is pretty bad. We shot the film in English because it was the most spoken language. We had only three actors from Germany, all the rest were from Mexico, Brazil, Peru and one guy came from Mississippi. We had people from 16 countries in the crew. The dubbing was necessary because many of them had such bad pronunciation. The man who was supposed to do the dubbing ran off with the money, he went to Peru and had there. I am really sad at him because we had to have makeshift dubbing. I'll really stay angry for that, really really sad. Anyway, I'll do it one day, I'll get that guy.

Can you tell us something of your plans for your next movie?

Well I have finished shooting a film called *Every Man for Himself and God Against All*. Somehow it is difficult for me to tell about my future, however I know that it is going to be by far my best film. I have put so much in it and have given everything I can give. I made that film with a feeling that it was my last real film. Somehow it is like having drawn a line and summarized everything I knew about violence and about experience. It's all in the film and it's like my last film. A couple of years ago I knew precisely what to do after a film and here it was always a problem to get the money and organize it. This time I have four or five plans, but I don't know what to do, I really don't know. I will come along somehow. I have a project I would like to make in Bavaria, but it might be a different type of film, I can start something new from this point on.

To think off: there is a spirituality in all your film, something larger than life.

Yes these might be. It's difficult for me to speak about it because I am so involved. I see what you mean and I think it's true. I am not that from the reaction of audiences.

Are you yourself religious?

No I wouldn't say so. My thoughts

are usually quite fondish. I don't like to talk about it but I did have a very religious one in my life when I was converted to be a Catholic at 16. Maybe from that there is a sort of hatred. Anyway, I always say that I don't believe in God, I only believe in the Church. ■

WERNER HERZOG FILMOGRAPHY

HERAKLES 1942 Producer, Werner Herzog. Acting Script, Director, Werner Herzog. Music, Udo Jochheim. Photography, Hans Pichler. Actor, Leo Gennaro. 15 min. Black and white. 35 mm.

GAME IN THE SAND 1946 (omnibus) Producer, Werner Herzog. Editing Script, Director, Werner Herzog. Assistant, Udo Jochheim. Photography, Hans Pichler. 14 min. Black and white. 35 mm.

THE UNPROMISED PROMISE OF THE FORESTERS 1948-1949 Producer, Werner Herzog. Assistant, Udo Jochheim. Director, Werner Herzog. Photography, Hans Pichler. Actor, Wolfgang von Quast. Shooting, 12 min. Black and white. 35 mm.

LAST WORDS 1947 Producer, Werner Herzog. Assistant, Udo Jochheim. Director, Werner Herzog. Photography, Hans Pichler. Actor, Hans Pichler. 15 min. Black and white. 35 mm.

SCENES OF LIFE 1947 Producer, Werner Herzog. Assistant, Udo Jochheim. Director, Werner Herzog. Photography, Hans Pichler. Actor, Hans Pichler. 15 min. Black and white. 35 mm.

PRECAUTIONS AGAINST FINANCES 1948 Producer, Werner Herzog. Assistant, Udo Jochheim. Director, Werner Herzog. Photography, Hans Pichler. Actor, Hans Pichler. 15 min. Black and white. 35 mm.

YATE MORGANA 1948-1950 Producer, Werner Herzog. Assistant, Udo Jochheim. Director, Werner Herzog. Photography, Hans Pichler. Actor, Hans Pichler. 15 min. Black and white. 35 mm.

THE FLYING DOUGLERS OF EAST AFRICA 1951 Producer, Werner Herzog. Assistant, Udo Jochheim. Director, Werner Herzog. Photography, Hans Pichler. Actor, Hans Pichler. 15 min. Black and white. 35 mm.

EVEN DEAFER HEARD SMALL 1951-1952 Producer, Werner Herzog. Assistant, Udo Jochheim. Director, Werner Herzog. Photography, Hans Pichler. Actor, Hans Pichler. 15 min. Black and white. 35 mm.

HANDICAPPED FUTURE 1951 Producer, Werner Herzog. Assistant, Udo Jochheim. Director, Werner Herzog. Photography, Hans Pichler. Actor, Hans Pichler. 15 min. Black and white. 35 mm.

LAND OF SILENCE AND DARKNESS 1951 Producer, Werner Herzog. Assistant, Udo Jochheim. Director, Werner Herzog. Photography, Hans Pichler. Actor, Hans Pichler. 15 min. Black and white. 35 mm.

AGUIRRE, THE WRATH OF GOD 1955-1956 Producer, Werner Herzog. Assistant, Udo Jochheim. Director, Werner Herzog. Photography, Hans Pichler. Actor, Hans Pichler. 15 min. Black and white. 35 mm.

THE GREAT ECSTASY OF THE SCULPTOR STONER 1957 Script, Director, Werner Herzog. 15 min. Black and white. 35 mm.

EVERY MAN FOR HIMSELF AND GOD AGAINST ALL 1978 Film in production. Script and direction, Werner Herzog.

'You Don't Blow Up Ladies'

Patricia Edgar

Violence is the cinema's next new. Mick Searrett was cheering heroines to redemptory death in 1913 in *Birth of a Nation* (1914). Griffith included battle scenes, the Ku Klux Klan at work, and an interracial rape by a black man of a white girl, who chooses to leap from a cliff rather than face dishonor. Elsewhere a *Birthless* *Felena* (1923) portrayed a massacre, and *Gunpowder* (1930) was one of the most popular films by the 1930's.

Current films do reflect a preoccupation with violence which rarely occurs off-screen nowadays and there are quite deliberate attempts to shock and create nausea and revulsion in the audience. Over the years the shock threshold has certainly been raised.

Researchers have asked what it all means. Is violence as a means of achieving goals being abandoned? Are films inciting violence? Are we becoming desensitized? Studies have created violent acts, surveyed populations, experimented with viewer reactions, examined delinquents' attitudes, and the answers to the above questions are not to be found. Nor will they be with just further techniques. Experimental studies have nothing to do with violence in society. Content analysis is meaningless without an understanding of the context of film violence and of the context of that violence in society. Violence can be extremely rare in its nature and function. Official agencies are reluctant to solve their problems. Nations go to war and sanction hijackings and terrorism. So what are we talking about when we discuss cause and effect relationships between screen violence and an individual audience member?

One of the areas that has rarely been explored in the process of perception as applied to mass media. When we sit in an audience to view a film we do not understand, interpret or even see the same events on the screen as others around us. What we understand or recall relates to our own social context and life experience, to the same external events elicit different responses from different people.

In 1971 I undertook research in order to document this process. From an initial sample of 116 secondary school students in Victoria, who ranged in age from 12 to 14 years, 129 were selected on the basis of sex and self-esteem. Self-esteem is regarded as an important sociological and psychological variable by personality theories, clinicians and social psychologists. It is believed that self-esteem is associated with effective personal functioning and has pervasive and significant

effects. Research findings indicate that persons with low self-esteem suffer from feelings of inadequacy, anxiety, self-doubt and inferiority, which handicap them in their work and social relationships. Persons with high self-esteem are generally happier, better in their own perceptions, assume an active role in social groups and express their views effectively and frequently.

The 129 subjects in the research study were selected following three responses to a self-esteem inventory developed by an American psychologist (Stanley Cooperman). The inventory included questions relating to four areas — the home and family, the school, peer groups and general personal concerns and feelings — and each individual's score represented the evaluation he or she made about himself/herself in those four areas. The questionnaire was repeated five months later to ensure that the individual's

evaluation was maintained over time. These two subjects with the lowest and highest self-esteem scores were selected for the study.

Significant differences were expected in the interpretation of film content between individuals who regarded themselves highly and as being worthy, and individuals who regarded themselves poorly and as inadequate.

It was predicted that, while the four major groups — male high-esteem, male low-esteem, female high-esteem, female low-esteem — would respond to film content differently as a result of their different world views, there would be an individual response, due to each individual's unique life experience and, therefore, unique construction of reality, which would modify the patterns of response from the four groups.

The study involved the four groups viewing three films in a commercial cinema. Following each film they were interviewed, or responded to open-ended questionnaires, about their reactions to, and enjoyment of, each film. Half the sample viewed the films on one day and the other half viewed the films in a different order the following day.

Descriptions of the Films

The three films chosen were *The Dirty Dozen*, *The War Game* and *Two Women's House*. Although many students will have seen the films it is necessary to describe them in some detail to jog memories and to provide a reference for the viewers' responses.

The Dirty Dozen

The Dirty Dozen is set in England in 1944.

The film begins with a hanging execution in an army prison, which Major Reisman, a US army officer (Lee Remick) is called to witness. Reisman is noted for his rejection of discipline, for exceeding orders in the field, and he has a record demonstrating that he is an individual who does not submit meekly to authority. He is ordered to select 12 prisoners convicted for crimes of murder, rape and robbery with violence and to train and qualify them for a behind-the-lines operation in six weeks. Their target is to be a French chateau, used for conferences and recreation by German officers. Their purpose is to kill as many officers as possible in order to interrupt the German chain of command prior to the Allied forces' invasion of Europe. This mission is called Project Ambrass, as the men selected from Reisman's team are all sentenced to hanging or hard labour for their crimes. If the men agree to join the group they are offered the possibility of a pardon for their crime should they succeed in the mission and return alive. But if there is any breach of discipline, they will go right back to prison.

Reisman first meets the prisoners in the prison yard, where they refuse to drill correctly. Victor Fries (John Considine) defines Reisman and says he won't march. Reisman pulls him aside and says "Look you little bastard. Either you march or I beat your brains out." Reisman turns and Franco attacks him. Reisman throws him to the ground and looks him in the face. The rest of the prisoners then march.

Reisman is given a file on each prisoner and he visits each in his cell to persuade him to join. The prisoners are hostile and uncooperative but agree to take part as their options are limited. Reisman tells them, "The mission gives you three ways to go. Either you can foul up in training and you'll be back in prison, you can foul up in combat and I'll blow your brains out, or you can do as you're told. You are dependent upon each other. If any of you tries anything smart, then twice of you get it right in the head."

The men drive off to their training site, where they set to work building their facilities and beginning the training programme which involves all the skills they will later need, such as walking with noise, shooting, rope climbing and killing. The dozen are an ill-assorted reluctant "team". Reisman continually has to control acts of defiance, and reluctance to complete tasks. When training, one of the dozen freezes with fear two-thirds of the way up a high climbing rope. Reisman snags the rope from under him and the prisoner scurries up to the top midst the laughter of the others. Another of the dozen, a huge simple-minded man called Pappy (Glen Walker), condemned for an unintentional murder he committed after he was provoked, is reluctant to fight and does not wish to kill. He is taunted and pushed by Reisman until, enraged, he is ready to kill again, but Reisman who wields him off, orders him down and tells him he must learn to kill efficiently.

A psychiatrist who examines the dozen tells Reisman, "You have the most twisted bunch of psychopaths I have run into and Meggot

(Telly Savalas) is the worst!" Meggot believes he is called by God to do his will, which includes killing women, all of whom he regards as evil slugs. He sees Reisman as having cheated the Master (God) of his vengeance on the death by having "scratched them up their throats" when they were to die for their sins.

The incident which underlies the dozen for the first time occurs when Franco refuses to shiver in cold water. Reisman confronts the man, but to a man the other eleven prisoners stand by Franco. Reisman is delighted as this is an indication of the development of team feeling. He says "Boy do I love that Franco". He reminds obeying and watching privileges and puts the prisoners on K rations. The dozen grow beards, do not wash and therefore get their name, the "dirty dozen".

The next part of the training is parachute jumping, which has to be carried out at a camp led by Colonel Breed (Robert Ryan). Breed and Reisman are mutual enemies. Reisman tells his liaison officer to get Breed off his back. He says, "Tell him anything, tell him it's a top secret mission and we've got a general with us."

Consequently, when Reisman arrives with his men, Breed has arranged for an inspection of his platoon and a VIP greeting. Reisman says that since the mission is secret the general is travelling incognito. One of the prisoners, Pinkie (Donald Sutherland) has to pose as the general and make the inspection (to the amusement of the other prisoners). He warns to the role and says to Breed, "Very pretty, Colonel, but can they fight?"

Breed is furious and tells Reisman that he is a disorganised clown and that he is going to run him out. He gets two of his soldiers to beat up Vidvick in the latrine to try and get information out of him. Jefferson and Pappy come to the rescue, but they believe Reisman has organised the beating.

As training is almost over, Reisman brings the dozen into the guard's quarters, gives them alcohol and brings in prostitutes for the night. From his position as guard duty Meggot screams out, "I saw those filthy strumpers!"

The next day Breed and his men arrive at Reisman's camp and demand to know what is going on. Reisman is absent, but appears shortly to find Breed in control in the yard. He climbs to the guard house and fires into the soldiers. The dozen collect Breed's soldiers' guns, hitting and killing the soldiers as they do so, particularly the two who beat up Vidvick. Breed is forced out and he files a complaint with his superiors.

Reisman is summoned by the General (Ernest Borgnine) and told the entire operation is to be cancelled because of Breed's negative report. In response Reisman says that one of his men is better than ten of Breed's, and asks for a chance to show their worth. This chance is given during diagonal manoeuvres a week later. Breed's men are assigned to defend headquarters. Reisman says his men will knock out headquarters and catch Breed's entire staff. If the dozen fail they are to be sent back to prison.

The war game takes place end, by all kinds of fair but mostly obvious means, the dozen capture the headquarters and all the men, including Breed.

The General decides the mission will go ahead. At a final dinner (set out like The Last Supper) Reisman goes over the plans for the attack. The next scene shows the men in the dark ready to jump.

Throughout the entire first part of the film, the training period, there is much hilarity provoked by the dialogue (e.g., in reference to the food they are given to eat, Franco says, "I've stood in it before, but I've never eaten it") and situations (e.g., the war game and the inspection by the general).

The second part of the film involves their final mission, an attack by night on the German occupied French chateau. Fourteen men are involved: the major, the MP Sergeant and the dirty dozen. They have been well-armed and they set out to kill as many German officers as possible. They parachute behind enemy lines, and one is killed in the parachute drop. They make their way to the chateau, which Reisman and Vidvick enter disguised as German officers. All proceeds well until Meggot sits the threat of a woman who wanders into a room where he is hiding, and then starts shooting wildly. Jefferson, the black member of the dirty dozen, whose Meggot, and chafe and panic ensue. The Germans and their women, alerted that such is on his, flee into the cellars and Reisman and Vidvick, also pretending to flee, drop behind and lock the Germans in the cellar. Outside the German guards shoot at the rest of the dirty dozen. Pinkie is killed by a bullet hole in the forehead, another is blown up by his own grenade when his foot gets stuck in the roof as he tries to reach the radio tower to blow it up. The rest of the dirty dozen proceed to pour gasoline down the external ground air vents to the cellar, and Jefferson does a feat: run past the vents, trapping a hand grenade down each one. There is a series of spectacular explosions as the cellars and chateau are fully destroyed and the officers and their women are exterminated. Jefferson is shot as he finishes his run past the vents to the cellar as he tries to reach the radio tower to blow it up.

The rest of the dirty dozen proceed to pour gasoline down the external ground air vents to the cellar, and Jefferson does a feat: run past the vents, trapping a hand grenade down each one. There is a series of spectacular explosions as the cellars and chateau are fully destroyed and the officers and their women are exterminated. Jefferson is shot as he finishes his run past the vents to the cellar as he tries to reach the radio tower to blow it up. "We made it, we made it", he is shot. Only three of the original fourteen survive. Major Reisman, the MP and the member of the dirty dozen who had been shown to be the most trustworthy, Vidvick (Charles Bronson). His crime had been to shoot a soldier who was running off with the medical supplies. Reisman's comment when he learnt this was, "You made one mistake. You let somebody see you do it."

The final scene shows Reisman, Vidvick and the MP in hospital. They are visited by the two generals who sent them on the mission, who tell them what a fine job they have done. When they leave, Vidvick says, "Killing generals could get to be a habit with me."

The film is exciting and violent, filled with action, suspense and humour. It has been a box-office success, and one of the big money makers in the film industry.

It was described by the director, Robert Aldrich, as a film about the redemption of men. It has been described by a reviewer¹ as an immoral film that fails to make the point that the men are potent forces for precisely the same reason that society imprisoned them.



The Dirty Dozen "I don't think that you could get an officer as good as that guy who played the major!"



The War Game "It was unpleasant seeing people hurt and dying lying in the streets and just left there because it is real and in most time you don't see such really brutal people."

The War Game

The War Game is made as a documentary of a simulated atomic attack on Britain. The film describes the events that could lead up to a nuclear attack. It opens by showing maps indicating the deployment of British nuclear bomber bases, the areas which could be attacked by Russian missiles, and the plans for evacuation. The events in Berlin and Vietnam are shown as the catalyst which could lead to the holocaust. Views of ordinary citizens and public figures are juxtaposed, demonstrating their apathy and ignorance.

The film sets up a number of hypothetical situations and extends them to their logical conclusion. The plan to evacuate women and children to other communities and the plans to protect the public are shown. The Home Office makes an announcement in case of a nuclear attack, to encourage the evacuation of those setting equipment for shelters, and plans by owners of shelters to keep others out at gun point are shown.

The narrator comments in documentary style, "At 11:00 a.m. on September 16, a doctor makes an emergency call. The last two minutes of peace in Britain could look this way." We are then shown the effects of the bomb blast on the family the doctor has come to visit, who are 60 miles from the point of bomb impact. Eyeballs melt and furniture and curtains ignite in the house. The shock blast follows and words of 100 miles an hour blow people about. The scenes are set alongside a Bishop stating the world must learn to live with the bomb. "Law and order is necessary," he says. "I believe in the war of the just."

The bomb blast means agony and death for victims in three minutes. The survivors are divided into categories. Some are shot, many are left to die, covered in burns, in severe pain and with no drugs. For others, shock causes permanent neurosis. One third of the area of Britain is covered by radiation and death from leukemia results in five weeks.

Juxtaposed against pictures of the suffering, an official states, "The menu will be breaded steak, carrots, apple pie and custard." A nuclear expert states, "We can't say if the way of life will be the same." Over further images of the suffering victims the narrator says, "Hot beer could not be treated because there were no drugs. People offered two pounds for a lot of bread."

Hunger riots break out and police kill rioters, provoking a civil riot against police. The narrator says, "In fifteen years thirteen more countries will have nuclear weapons and we will possibly see this happen before 1980." After four months' austerity is rife from lack of food, refugee compounds are famine and anarchy state to the centers. "I don't want to be nothing."

The film ends with an account of the stockpiles of bombs, which continues to grow, and pictures of the wounded still waiting. Throughout, the camera lingers on the suffering of the people and the statements interspersed through the film offer no hope from public leaders. The film is so shocking in its impact that it was banned from the BBC in England for fear of the panic it might cause.

Such a film may appear to be an extreme choice, but it was chosen because of its strong impact, as all children in this age group are now used to seeing scenes of war duty in newscasts on television, the film chosen therefore had to be one which showed more than the usual war pictures shown by news reporters.



Our Mother's House: "He used the money the mother had saved for a rainy day and he brought other people home and had parties and told children to get lost."

Our Mother's House

Our Mother's House is a story revolving around a family of seven children. It begins startlingly with the death of the children's mother, who has been sick for a long time. Each evening the children have been accustomed to gather in the mother's room for "mother time," when she would read the Bible to them. This particular evening the mother dies. The children sit in the kitchen with their coats and discuss the situation. They decide that they will keep the mother's death a secret so that they will not be placed in an orphanage. Dunstan, the second eldest boy says, "We have to have a father. God said so." Diane, the second eldest girl says, "They're not going to take mother away are they?" And Gerrie, the youngest girl says, "Can't we bury mother in the garden?"

They decide to do this and to have "mother time" each night, the same as they always had in order to talk to her. They move all their mother's things to the outdoors in the garden — Our Mother's House — and each night they "talk" to mother through Diane, who goes into a trance, rocks backwards and forwards in a rocking chair and conveys the mother's "intentions." Else, the eldest, assumes the mother role and discharges the housekeeper (Mrs. Quail). The children attempt to maintain family unity. Mrs. Quail, most suspicious about her dismissal, is unpleasant to the children and threatens their adoptions, as she does not accept Else's explanation that their mother has gone away for a holiday. Jimmie seems to forge his mother's signature and the children each their mother's social security check regularly. Else finds a letter from their father which she throws away, but Hugh the eldest boy finds it and keeps the address.

Against this unusual home setting the children are shown playing, going to school and coping with the day-to-day problems of growing up.

One day a stranger on a motor bike gives seven-year old Gerrie a lift home. When the man drops her at the front door Gerrie reaches up and kisses him. Dunstan sees this and at "mother time" says, "You brought a stranger to the house. You let the stranger touch you!"

Gerrie, "I only kissed him!"

Dunstan, "Herot. You were vulgar. Gerrie must be punished!"

Gerrie experiences a sunny ache. Diane, looking in the chest, says, "Take away comb, cut her hair." They decide that mother wishes to punish Gerrie by cutting off her long hair. Gerrie's hair is an obsession with her; she screams and screams as it is cut off. Hugh later finds Gerrie sitting shivering in a corner, her face white and some of her hair still lying around her. She becomes very ill.

Because their mother had never allowed a doctor in the house and "refused" again at "mother time," Else will not allow Hugh to call a doctor for Gerrie. The younger children continue to laugh and play at dressing up and the older ones, except Hugh, believe God will look after Gerrie. Hugh tries to tempt Gerrie to eat, offering her the cream biscuits she loves, and decides to stay home from school to look after her. Hugh is so worried about her that he writes to their father and asks him to come. Jimmie's teacher has been asking him for a note from his mother, and is becoming impatient in her requests. Jimmie arrives home from school one day with a runaway friend, Louis, and Hugh says, "You've got to send him home." At "mother time" Diane says mother agrees that Louis can stay, so the children decide to keep him. Jimmie's teacher comes to the house to locate Louis and at the point where she enters the mother's bedroom, Charlie, their father, arrives to take over.

After the teacher has left with Louis, Else says to her father, Charlie, "We don't need you," Hugh replies, "Else tells all we've got. He's got to stay. We've got to make him stay." Else replies, "We're mother's children, don't forget that!"

Charlie (John Bogardal) takes sheep, sorts out his situation and decides to stay with the children. He goes through all the papers when the children are at school, finds the bank book listing their savings and fears up the mother's will. With the exception of Else, the children except Charlie and grow very fond of him. He plays with them, tells them stories and brings an air of fun and gaiety to the family. Else never jokes in. She accuses Hugh of not being

about mother: "All I ever hear is Charlie!"

Charlie has no job and uses the children's money to take them on outings, buy a car, gamble, have parties and spend on women. Jimmie always willingly forges signatures for Charlie. One night Charlie gives a party and next morning Diane wakes into Charlie's bedroom with his breakfast, to find him in bed with a woman. Diane is very upset by this incident.

Mrs. Quail, the housekeeper, returns and tells Charlie she knows what is going on. Charlie tries to keep her quiet by being friendly with her, but she is jealous of his activities with other women.

Else has been maintaining that Charlie is bad. The other children begin to take notice of her when they learn that Charlie is planning to mortgage the house and that he is using up all their money. One night Charlie returns home to find all the children sitting waiting for him. He is half-drunk when they confront him as a group. He argues in his defense, but finally loses his temper and says he's sick of their sentimental view of their mother, who was a whore. He tells them that not one of them belongs to him and he picks up a picture of the mother and stamps on it.

Diane, who has refused to believe that Charlie did not love them, is extremely upset. She picks up a poker and hits Charlie on the head, killing him. At this moment Mrs. Quail yells at the door and tries to get in. The children remain silent and she goes away. Following the directness of what has happened, the children leave the house and walk to the doctor's to tell him what has taken place. "We've told him about mother?" asks Willy. "Yes," replies Else.

This film was chosen because it involved children of varying ages in a number of realistic situations other children could identify with: the death of a parent, a broken marriage, family rows, keeping secrets from adult authorities. These were combined with unlikely fantasy elements: successfully concealing their mother's death, successful deception of the bank manager, contact with the dead mother through spiritualist seances,

There are assurances, then, in the film, of portrayals of violence of different types. The focus in *The Dirty Dozen* and *Our Mother's House* is on a group who are held together, despite internal conflicts, by a common aim. *The Dirty Dozen* and *The War Game* involve the consequences of war. All three films involved heroes suffering and death. In *Our Mother's House* only two people died and the implications of their two deaths were explored in depth. In the two war films, the death and destruction were on a much broader scale. There is no blood and gore in *Our Mother's House* and the black and white medium in *The War Game* reduces the visual effects of the violence and blood, but *The Dirty Dozen* graphically shows all deaths in Tashirovka. In all films, violence and religion were linked in some way.

Our Mother's House shows the effects on the children of their mother's distorted religious views; in *The War Game* shows statements from clergymen supporting the stockpiling of nuclear weapons as set against the horror of the effects of atomic war; in *The Dirty Dozen* Major sees himself as an instrument of God's vengeance on the world; he is the first to kill "in the name of God."

Discussion of the Results

More than 90 per cent of the viewers in all groups enjoyed *The Dirty Dozen*, and thought it a funny and exciting film. It disturbed very few of them and a majority in all groups wanted to see the film again. More girls than boys reported they found the film cruel in parts, frightening and unpleasant. However this did not affect their enjoy-

ment of the film. *The War Game* was liked least. There is a marked sex difference in the responses to this film. Fewer girls liked the film than boys, but within the boys' groups were high esteem subjects liked *The War Game* their low esteem subjects, with 40.5 per cent of the high esteem boys saying they liked the film and 34 per cent wanting to see it again. *Our Mother's House* was more popular with the girls than the boys, but again within the sex groups the high esteem groups liked the film more than the low esteem groups.

While the quantitative data shows the general patterns of response it is the detailed narrative data which demonstrates most clearly individual responses and interpretations of the film. While there are patterns for the different esteem groups, individual responses within groups are sometimes quite opposite.

Viewers' Responses to the Dirty Dozen.

The viewers enjoyed the film for its action, comedy, drama, excitement, adventure and suspense.

"Not good. Funny in some parts. Don't like war but liked that, it was real good." (F102)

"The cartoon part was exciting, starting from when they dropped in parachute. Because they were in real danger, not money. And war games make me thinking because if they didn't succeed, they would be hurt." (M102)

"Good because I want, being in it. Because it got to something or it was funny." (M102)

One FHE subject who saw *The Dirty Dozen* following *The War Game* said:

"Was bad. Not good. Nothing that makes me see. But not all comments were enthusiastic."

"I didn't like the film much because in some parts [didn't understand it and it was too bloody] but I did like it a bit because it didn't have any bloody parts in it." (F104)

"Yes, I enjoyed it, but there was too much fighting." (M102)

All viewers were asked if the film had a message. Many thought the film had no message, but several mentioned the message the director of the film, Robert Aldrich, had intended. "The Dirty Dozen is a film about the redemption of men." The young viewers worked the message somewhat more simply than Aldrich and there are various levels of sophistication in their interpretations of the film's message.

"They became better soldiers. I can't explain. Because you see the way, a moral lesson kind of." (F102)

"I think it was trying to say that these men that had been condemned were not really bad right through and that with understanding and the right training they could be good soldiers." (F102)

Some saw morality in the soldiers' actions.

"There was a lot of love that making their lives to save their country." (M102)

Others had a more pragmatic view.

"Condemned men will ask things to a machine to get freedom." (M102)

"They were all fighting for their life and not the army." (F102)

Some observations were insightful.

"Freedom was more important than death to be able to be good soldiers." (F102)

"What proved for your life considerably was time." (F104)

Others were more naive.

"I think it is trying to tell us that between bad people and they are always bad of bad and the police men the only ones that make you there a choice. The prisoners realized this and wanted the Major and finally they were better than any army a Major could possibly have." (F104)

Some viewers saw an anti-war message.

"I think the theme of this film is how awful the second world war was. It was trying to say not to start a war again." (M102)

Overall both groups of low esteem viewers were less able to express or articulate a message for the film than were high esteem viewers.



The Dirty Dozen: "War is cruel but they had an important message."



The Dirty Dozen: "I think it was trying to say that these men that had been condemned were not really bad right through and that with understanding and the right training they could be good soldiers."

All viewers were asked if they thought the film could happen and was realistic. Some simply said:

"I think it was all real because it looked realistic" (FHE).

Others accepted the film because

"Almost anything is possible in war time" (MHE).

Some viewers explained the convincing nature of the film by referring to Vietnam.

"The story is real. Such things happen in war, the bombing and the shooting and all that. This Vietnam, bombing, happens there. Wars happen in real life" (FHE).

Others disagreed:

"Couldn't happen. It is not that simple to kill people" (MHE).

"Couldn't happen because soldiers in armies aren't dumb. I couldn't see our Defense Minister falling as if he was like 12 pounds left to be crushed as soldiers. I don't think that you could get an officer as foolish as that guy who played the Major" (MHE).

Several viewers questioned continuities in the plot.

"Not likely that a person would put their foot through the roof. Lucky to get off people into one rather" (FHE).

"Used him once of the men running after being shot. The opposite side died every time when they were shot but most of the story doesn't happen when it is off" (FHE).

Maggot was described as unconvincing because:

"It is never heard of a person quite like that"

The implication from that response is that, if behaviour is unfamiliar to the viewer, then the viewer is unconvinced or finds the behaviour unrealistic.

Similarly, one viewer rejected the final scenes

"The part where they put grenades into the other rooms are terrible to be real. People won't do that" (FHE).

Some viewers found the film convincing but acknowledged it was not real because it was just a film.

"Could happen. With luck and the low conditions under real happen. The experience was real, not experiences. Maggot stuffing the gut was real. But there could not be anything really real ... unless it's just a film" (MHE).

"Real parts. When he didn't get shot in the head he wouldn't get the explosion. This could happen in real life. The same too about the person passing down into the Germans. It was real too when the soldiers got shot (like the one coming out of the head). It was really good to see because it was as well acted. I know how hard that is to do well because I have done drama at school. None of it was real. If you was real, like real war" (MHE).

Responses to questions relating to cruelty, unpleasant scenes and frightening incidents varied considerably. Several viewers said they weren't bothered at all because what was done had to be done.

"No fighting. Things that happened were expected, as if they got behind into some things to be killed, natural thing to happen. The whole reason could be cruel but had to be done, as it is the real when men were killed, this was inevitable. Not unpleasant because it was realistic and was expected ... I like this sort of film because I like it when men had to fight to do something, just like a family and are together as a nation" (MHE).

"Useful? No. Possibly the hanging, maybe because it was the plan. Not really cruel. Would have been less cruel to shoot them like Germans when they were moving across the lobby rather than lock them in the cell" (LE).

This comment indicates an acceptance of the plot structure. The plot necessitated killing off all the Germans so the viewer commented on an alternative possibility for killing rather than on killing at all.

Another response of interest that occurs with viewers is the acceptance of violence, providing they don't see the result:

"When the men were killed in the cellar and then Mass up, I thought well. Not upset because I didn't see details" (FHE).

"Upset sometimes. When you saw a German come out, said 'Maybe that's about one of the twins. Or of someone you don't know' he wouldn't take his hands away so I didn't see what had happened to him" (FHE).



The Dirty Dozen: ... treating when they blow up the whole house and that"



The Dirty Dozen: ... This Vietnam. Bombing happens there. What happens in real life"

"Cried when they showed pictures of dead bodies lying around with eyes still popped out. They should be covered up or something done to them" (MHE).

Seeing Frankie shot through the head as he stood by the car drew a number of comments:

"I didn't like the way he died" (MHE).

"Upset about how when the man got shot in the head but I liked it because it is very realistic" (MHE).

"His (Frankie's) eyes looked terrible, they seemed to stare at you" (FHE).

"Upset when shot between the eyes - I've never seen that before - I like that. Yes, I'd like to see in again - to see the shot between the eyes again - see the bullet wound" (MHE).

One of the things worth of the boys felt was most objectionable was the killing of the women.

"Cried thinking people like boys other because there were women down there. This was the cruelest thing, really because there were women down there" (MHE).

One viewer who said he enjoyed seeing the 'gay shot in the head' said:

"It was cruel. Killing up ladies. Movies was not to kill the women, only the officers. They weren't told to kill the women" (FHE).

Only one girl was reminded of any personal experience by the film. It was a fight at the school toilets.

With the boys the responses were usually related to fighting or being picked on:

"Kids pick on me at school and Clint Walker stood up for the little kids and that's why I like him" (MHE).

"When Lee Marvin killed the man in the head, I was at a fight with my best mate (as many) I broke my head. The movie was full to the ground and looked on. Not away people, but some people going up to me and are cruel to me by showing women, a little person picked me and I have the choice of taking it or punishing the little kid head, which came up to a fight on the top of the gang pool" (MHE).

Despite individual differences, there is a majority



The War Game: "It was like the news. I hate the news. I like movies better."



The War Game: "In a way it was good because it showed what could happen if we don't do something about our nuclear weapons."

ing patterns in the responses to the violence in the film. Violence was interpreted within the accepted conventions of an adolescent war film. Readers must note two things to the viewers. The violence looked realistic and many would rather get lost at the effects of someone being shot or killed, but on the whole the horror was accepted because of the stylistic form of the film. Few subjects commented or considered the real atrocities in the film, when they did it was usually because the conventions of the genre were not observed. For example, pretty boys objected to the women being killed, for that kind of killing is generally not part of the accepted violence of a war film. But this was not motivated by reference to another convention, the only women killed were Germans and therefore had to be killed because they too were the enemy.

All groups liked the film, thought that it was exciting and convincing, the main differences were

between the males and females in response to the questions relating to fear, cruelty and unpleasantness. The females said they were less accepting of those aspects of the film but they did not affect the extent of their enjoyment. They commented on incidents and were critical of certain aspects, but it was still an enjoyable film. There was an awe of measuring the extent to which the different socialization experiences of the males and females resulted in the girls saying they found the violence and cruelty upsetting.

The major points that are evident from the interview data are that individual differences in responses are found in all groups. Generally the film was interpreted within the conventions of a war film and this determined the extent of the horror subjects experienced and how they interpreted it, the differences in responses between groups were differences between males' and females' views of cruelty or unpleasantness

and there was more personal identification with experiences by both male groups than by the female groups. The main difference between the scenes groups seemed to be in their ability to understand or interpret a message or theme in the film.

The discussions of the other two films being out these distinctions more clearly.

Viewers' Responses to The War Game

A large majority in all groups did not like The War Game. It was described in the following ways.

"Awful" (F102)

"Bored & not entertaining ... even educational. Should not be shown to all children and to little children. (It's okay to show it to secondary school children)" (F102)

"I wish I hadn't seen it" (F102)

Others described it as "horrid", "sickening" and some said it was

"Boring like a long sermon"

"It was like the news. I hate the news. I like movies better" (F102)

"I didn't like the film, it didn't get to you. It was not like a war film. It was a bit boring and I couldn't see anything" (M102)

But for all those who were bored or who did not want to know about the film, there were other viewers in all groups who were glad they saw the film although they found it was disturbing.

"In a way I did enjoy it and in a way I didn't. I liked it because I found out something I knew before but not in quite the same. I can't remember some things" (F101)

"I would like to see it again later. It would be good to get this between people (people would say). A student showing would give more people an idea of the effects of a nuclear attack." (M102)

"It was an educational film. I wouldn't want to see it again because it was unpleasant, but other people should see the film. Presidents and leaders of countries who are nuclear weapons" (M102)

For most of the MHE viewers than other viewers took a sobering attitude. Several wanted the film to be widely seen on television with a view to influencing opinion so that a nuclear war may be prevented. It may be that high status males feel more able to control their environment and take action to alter the course of events. There were only two girls who made comments suggesting others should be shown the film. Many girls thought it should be banned. However, not all MHE subjects coped well with the film. Others "bristled" and "fused" it "traumatizing", "horrid" and "gory". One viewer was even unsure about the capacity of weapons to film the events.

"I don't think a photograph would be able to take pictures (nuclear war) the most people see the killing in the news"

There were several viewers who saw no message in the film, but most saw it as a warning about the possibility of nuclear war. Some individuals saw it as indicating that England should continue or that we should prepare for and learn to accept the fact of nuclear war.

The War Game was described by most viewers as the most realistic, convincing film of the day.

"The film was a story, the second one was true" (M102)

"The War Game was the most real film because they showed it was real by showing the pictures of people who were killed" (M102)

"Real because this was a documentary" (F102)

"The actors were not as good as the other two films, but in the War Game the people were really lost, they were lost" (M102)

The reasons given for the realism related to human actions, the form in which the film was presented and the perception that the people in the film were actually dead. Some viewers had knowledge of the events in Japan in World War II and saw the film as showing those events.



Our Mother's House "It was cruel how the father went about with other women and brought them home. That hurt the children."

realistic".

"I didn't like the film as well as *The Dirty Dozen*. There was a bit of dramatic ending and I don't really like the end of stuff" (MLR).
 "I didn't really enjoy the film, it frightened me" (PLR).

Within groups there were opposite reactions:
 "There was nothing wrong, it was exactly like the name of the mother's death" (MLR).

"It was really disgusting, in the bed with the mother, the way the kids acted. You had a very boring or you would think not or what they were doing" (MLR).

There were very mixed interpretations of the message of the film in all groups:

"It is perhaps to love Man and all that he may do as a family" (PLR).

"The film was trying to tell you in many the right way to make" (PLR).

"It was just a real story saying that you cannot live by yourself but need someone to look after you when kids are first age" (MLR).

"It showed how the father corrupted the children" (MLR).

"I think they tried to corrupt the idea of people becoming over-indulgent" (PLR).

"This isn't what others" (MLR).

All groups were divided over the film's credibility:

"It could happen, this don't like going into an

apartment and don't like talking about these parents. Yes it was a story" (PLR).

"I didn't come to school or from because you can't have a lot of kids living like that. The whole thing mother's house because I don't think it should be a story that their children that old when it was they didn't have a father" (PLR).

Some viewers, while accepting parts of the plot, weren't convinced by other aspects:

"You can't have enough girls to be their father" (PLR).

"I don't think it would happen because children aren't left alone, we have more mothers and they know who would go to see everybody's business. But the real part was what the men knew he was going to do, taking them away from the men could happen. But taking him, in the end with the girl it was really stupid" (PLR).

"Crying about the father that he died was stupid, people don't really cry about a man. It is natural not to cry about, the majority of business don't do it" (MLR).

"The father's answer was stupid. Children would have to have more knowledge of adults in order to cry out such a man" (MLR).

Aspects of the film that seemed convincing to individuals were the separation of the mother and father and Charlie's behavior:

"Where Charlie knew how much it was very sad" (PLR).

Most of the children disliked Charlie:

"I disliked the father, he was dry and let the children

out, not even in the film I like the way he acted. He had no respect for the mother when all the children did the same the mother had to do for a group and he brought other people home and had parties and sent the children to get over" (PLR).

"The father was cruel to the children all the time, taking advantage of them. And the parents are not with the film they were cruel the father shouldn't have done that. The father was cruel because he had no respect for the film. He thought of himself all the time and the children thought that he loved them" (MLR).

"I was upset when Charlie pushed his daughter on the floor. My father was never drunk enough and pushing his little sister and me and I felt very angry and let me punish my father. It was cruel in the film where Charlie was telling us to get out, when he had the kids all alone in the room for themselves and when he didn't know where I hid them, their father, he should have been a better father. He didn't care about them, he didn't love them, what they did or how they did whatever it was. I don't want to see it again, I don't like these kinds of films" (PLR).

Because of such feelings about Charlie most viewers were sympathetic when he was killed. They felt "he had it coming".

"Anyone can have a drinking father and feel like being their kid. Sometimes I feel like that myself my mother is at home" (MLR).

"It was terrible how your father who killed him" (PLR).

"The part when Charlie got killed was the best with the girl father was a cruel, he deserved it" (PLR).

But other viewers expressed dislike instead of sympathy for the children:

"The whole thing seems to me, I wouldn't like this to happen in people. I didn't like the children in the film because they were not enough a woman they had a lot of kids. They were not enough a woman and the way they would have such other things of everything their mother had and I wouldn't like it" (PLR).

While most viewers were not upset by Charlie's death, most were upset by the mother's death:

"It was upset when the mother died as I would have wanted to see her death too" (PLR).

"It was surprising the way the mother died, she was her own wife and the same in the film. I don't like the way she died. She was not enough a woman and the way they would have such other things of everything their mother had and I wouldn't like it" (PLR).

"It was upset when the wife died and she had a lot of kids. She was not enough a woman and the way they would have such other things of everything their mother had and I wouldn't like it" (PLR).

Other incidents that viewers found upsetting included Charlie's sickness and when she was forced to have her hair cut. While some viewers thought it unpleasant when Charlie was in bed with the "girlfather" others thought this was the most exciting part of the film.

As might be expected, *Our Mother's House* attracted most viewers in all groups of personal experience that did not share two films. They were regarded as family arguments, mothers who had been sick and when in the end, the mother was responsible for the family, being worried by parents, being unhappy like the children in the film. The film evoked many comments about the women's own family lives. For example:

"I realized one of my friends was always telling. The father in the film telling his children that they were his" (PLR).

"The way the children really seemed unhappy and sad in the film" (PLR).

"The film reminds me of my family and my dad, who gets drunk and argues, and even his children have a lot" (PLR).

There were significant differences in the responses to *Our Mother's House* between the seven groups and the ten groups. *Our Mother's House* was far more popular with the girls than the boys, possibly because girls play leading roles in the film and the film focused on a family situation. But a marked difference in the responses between groups was the number of girls who said that they liked the film because it was sad and they liked to cry in the film. While a very small number of boys said they liked the film for

The same reasons, not one boy admitted to crying during the film and several boys said they hated and hated the film and hated the war. This was different in response undoubtedly relates to different socialization experiences and different definitions of what is appropriate behavior for males and females. Girls are expected to be emotional and to cry, boys are not. If the film evoked this response in boys they were more likely, it seemed, to reject the film. This is a possible explanation for some of the male reactions. For example:

"This one was shit. This one you have to participate in."

On the one hand, the subject seems to be saying that he found the film boring but he implied that he became involved nevertheless.

Another interesting response from some low income boys was to blame the killing Chinese and to say, they committed that this would not happen as a girl would not do such a thing.

Most subjects in all groups displayed an expressed hatred for Charlie. This antagonism was entirely with the children and they thought Charlie used them and abused their love and trust. Only one subject thought it was cruel to kill Charlie. Some thought he deserved what he got and kill sorry for Germans who killed him. On the whole, subjects thought Charlie was cruel to tell the children the truth about their mother and destroy their illusions.

The viewers' acceptance of the credibility of the film depended on their perceptions of whether they would be able to do what the children in the film did. Several subjects in all groups could not imagine having mothers in the back yard or being able to dig a hole deep enough to hide someone and "it's not like dead people" or "they were afraid."

The viewers, on the whole, found "motherhood" unconvincing because they had not had such an experience themselves.

Another consistent response in all groups was to accept that the relationship between the mother and Charlie could exist, because families are like that; many people are separated and many families come home dirty, scared, or their children, like they, want to get home more than anything. The main difference is that the high income subjects talk about knowledge that this happens while the low income subjects of few mention that it happens to them. Other low income subjects remark that it's not the way the kids talk together:

"I have four brothers and three sisters and they don't talk together like in the film."

Overall many viewers identified with the film because the story involved children of their own age in situations they were familiar with. A number of subjects remarked they:

"We were angry for the kids that the soldiers,"

or that the deaths were more upsetting because they were unexpected.

In the first film you knew they are going to die because the guns, but in *Our Mother's House* they die without any particular reason."

Events were partly interpreted in terms of appropriate non-role behavior and reacted to in particular ways for the same reason. Entense is a variable that is more likely to affect the viewers' reactions to the family situations depicted. But it is clear that some subjects in all groups was more relaxed in the film, though some subjects were quite bored. The sex and income variables, while significant in determining some response patterns are misleading if used to make predictions for all individuals, or even most individuals in each group.

In order to compare adult responses to the three films with the children's responses the interviewers were asked to write responses to the same questions they had asked the children.

The interviewers, like the interviewees, enjoyed *The Dirty Dozen*. Their analysis of the film is much more complex than that of the younger subjects. Some admitted to enjoying the film but felt disgusted that they did. One said the film was

"philosophically rotten" and another said, "high film critics' worse attitude to war and violence". The comments expressed by one interviewee was that how to explain how rotten the film was when he enjoyed it so much and the kids enjoyed it.

The objections to the film were that it was a frivolous kick filler with double standards, not really bringing out the terrible events were he responsible for killing. Some interviewees objected to the director's manipulation of audience sympathies when he showed the dirty dozen dying while all the Germans were being blown up, others objected to Reizen's anti-human degrading of individual prisoners.

One interviewee and the film was simply meant to entertain and was not to be taken seriously. The dilemma is an interesting one. Most of the interviewees enjoyed the film but they recognized undesirable character traits, knew solutions to problems and felt they should not have enjoyed it. They worried in case younger people who do not have their experience or perceptions did not see through the manipulations and double standards at the film. Certainly the younger viewers did not analyze the film in the same way as the adults, yet the adults must also interpret and accept the film for what it was an entertainment.

The interviewee and interviewee responses on *The War Game* were very similar. The interviewees were just as horrified, shocked, grieved and frightened by the film. Not one said they were bored, as some of the low income subjects did, but they did admit to identifying to the extent of worrying that this might happen to them. "I kept thinking of myself."

Two interviewees are interesting in view of their implications. One is the admission by one interviewee that she has "wanted to commit infanticide since she was a child". This obviously applies to the younger viewers also. The second comment by two people was that the film had less impact on second viewing. This could have occurred because the viewer knew what was coming and therefore prepared himself, for another interviewee said, "So I wasn't really shocked or shocked or surprised."

The difference between the interviewees' comments on *Our Mother's House* compared with the younger viewers relate directly to the different ages of the groups. The adults are sympathetic towards the children, whom they see as vulnerable, but their perspective on events is quite different. They are not so hard on Charlie and understand his position and comment on the way he tried to help. They see the mother as a genuine religious fanatic who was responsible for the violent views of the children. One female interviewee, like one of the female interviewees, questioned the way the children stood up to Charlie. Many of the adults commented on moments of personal experience which the film aroused; in fact, most interviewees were reminded of something by the film. This may come from their adult experience of the world, for the examples given often relate to the perspective an adult person would have. One interesting response came from a Chinese interviewee who, from a different cultural perspective, found "motherhood" convincing.

On the whole *The Dirty Dozen* and *The War Game* evoked similar but more sophisticated responses from the older viewers compared with the younger viewers. The main difference in interpretation occurs with *Our Mother's House*, the difference obviously stemming from the perspective of a child compared with the perspective of an adult.

The research I have described leads support to the following hypotheses:

an audience member will attend to and be affected or disturbed by something that relates to his own experience but not by things outside his experience;
an audience member who regard themselves as low in esteem will prefer to watch programmes unrelated to their real life experience; audience members who regard themselves as high in es-

teem will be more interested in "reality" programmes ("reality" in this context meaning "real" for the viewer);
adult perceptions of film content do not coincide with the perceptions of adolescents.

Our views of the world clearly affect what we see and what we see affects what we say and personal experience. When we watch a film, our viewer is relative. It is relative to the film, the genre, the degree of involvement in the film, and one's own personal experiences in life which may or may not affect what is perceived on film.

Violence in *The Dirty Dozen* was an expected part of the story, soldiers were expected to be killed. The viewers wanted the dirty dozen to survive because they were the "goodies" and their death was pity, but not unexpected and not disturbing. It was, after all, "only a film".

It is when the conventions are broken that the viewers' response becomes ambiguous. Viewers don't like the women being killed in *The Dirty Dozen*. They did not feel that killing belonged in such a film, but the women were Germans too, therefore the killing was accepted.

The horrified responses to *The War Game* are related to the fact that Peter Watkins broke all the rules. He presented a seemingly realistic and fast what was fiction. The response this technique evoked was so strong that British viewers were prevented from seeing the film.

Similar confusion in response to violence was evident in audiences' and critics' reactions to *A Clockwork Orange* and *The Godfather*. In *A Clockwork Orange* there is only one killing and we do not see the battered corpse. In *The Godfather* we were vivid portraits of two generations, a son blown apart at close range by several sub-machineguns, several other close range shootings, including a man on a message table sent through the eye, and a man waking up to find his prize possession's newly severed, very bloody head in his bed. Yet this very popular film was received calmly, while *A Clockwork Orange* was widely condemned.

The difference is important in no doubt largely due to a familiarity with the gangster genre, even though *The Godfather* was more violent than usual. The gangster is a hero and he is in a *Time* magazine reviewer commented we "tend to regard gangsters with nostalgic indulgence as individualistic resistance fighters against society".

A Clockwork Orange like *Straw Dogs* or *Deliverance* was not so identifiable genre. It is movies of this kind which provoke responses we can't easily categorize and cope with. They present a kind of violence that requires deciphering. It is an analysis of types of film violence, violence and violence which is needed before further work can be done. Thorough theoretical investigation must provide further insight. But given an understanding of the significance in our responses we are still a long way from relating film content and behaviours to attitudes.

The next step in research planning should be to investigate the relationship between types of scene violence and the context of that violence within society. Film and television violence can no longer be studied preferentially in isolation from the setting in which it is viewed. *

FOOTNOTES:

1. The problem for ordering this study and a more detailed discussion of the meaning of violence can be found in P. H. L. (1974) *Violence and Attitudes to Film and Television: A Study of the Effects of Violence on Children*. Ph.D. thesis 1973, La Trobe University.
2. Denis D. and Shannon A. *Dirty Dozen* Stanford University Press.
3. In the discussion of the three films I have referred to research in the shape of the order female high income (FHI), female low income (FLI), male high income (MHI), male low income (MLI). The order of the films discussed above on (imply) audience data is to select a low income which will clearly be a good thing to do. In most cases the order of the films could have been reversed with no loss of the conclusions to be reached in the relevant genre films.
4. There are the terms used by John Frow, *Violence in the Arts* Cambridge University Press, 1976.

BOB WARD INTERVIEW



"We blew every appplecart out of business"

Tony Ginnane, independent film producer and authority on Restrictive Trade Practices legislation at the Film Industry, and *Cinema Papers'* editor Scott Murray interview Robert Ward, one of the two driving forces behind the Dandy Filmmakers group, one of the largest Australian-owned production-distribution-exhibition groups.

Robert Ward was born in 1937 into a family that was already steeped in movie tradition. His father began in the industry as an assistant projectionist at the Southern Theatre Hampton, which was one of Hoyts' suburban theatres, and then progressed to being projectionist at the Roxy Theatre in Sandringham. In 1933 he had stuck his neck out on a limb and taken a mortgage on a property that became the Prince George Theatre in Brighton. In these pre-TV days the theatre flourished screening general release movies. In 1940 building work began on the Dandy Theatre in Brighton, which despite the difficulties of war-time supply of materials opened in 1941. Through the fifties both theatres survived side by side.

During his years at university in the fifties Robert Ward began to programme for the Prince George Theatre, screening English films like *Kind Hearts and Coronets*, *Arsenic and Old Lace* and others quite different from the normal run of suburban release premising at the time.

What sort of attitude was prevailing then towards release patterns?

It was a fixed release pattern. There was no alternative at that stage. There was Hoyts, there was Greater Union and there were the Independents. Elsewhere was in the third week of release, some other theatre was in the fourth and Brighton was in the fifth. It was take it or leave it. You didn't argue — you didn't think about it, or even discuss it — and if you did you were bad news.

But prior to TV, the business was still there, whether you screened Elvis Presley or Turgan. And that came to TV in 1955, and by the end of 1957 things were looking pretty grim. Probably more people in Australia had seen when TV opened than any other country. The Olympics gave it a big visit. By mid 1958 theatres were closing so fast that it wasn't funny. Our family was associated with the purchase of the Savoy Theatre in Melbourne, the Mayfair Theatre in Gerdernville and

the Civic Theatre Ashburton, all of which in my opinion were excellent theatres but unfortunately we were unable to keep them going.

*At the same time Ward began to experiment in moving over commercial, subtitled films like *KISS and Wages* at Four from the Savoy Theatre in Korroll Street (run by associates of his father) — *Sir Frank Stribeck, Bruce Sellick and Peter Dawson*) to the theatre at Gerdernville and the Prince George.*

We found that the new Dandy Theatre when it was running Bob Hope, Elvis Presley, Clark Gable and Bert Lancaster or whoever was the star of the time was taking X dollars a week. Yet the old Prince George Theatre which was 200 yards away — where there wasn't a day when a dinner didn't occur like the ceiling might fall in or the toilets would block — had become as successful in Melbourne and was all of a sudden in taking more money weekly than the newer theatre. So it came to the stage that when I was at Melbourne University learning to be an Arts graduate, majoring in psychology, my father said to me "We can't keep two theatres going in the district." So we came to a family agreement that I would transfer that type of product from the old theatre to the new. That I had to go into the film companies — to Mr MGM, or Mr Warner Bros. or Mr Whoomer and say "Unfortunately your powers don't make money any more with our theatre and you can all go

and get stuffed. We are not going to honour our contracts because if we did we would go out of business. We are going to tear our contracts up and if you want to see us, not us, but if you see us you are going to have no theatre left to release us."

How did you get on in obtaining regular sub-titled and quality films?

Well we picked up a few off United Artists. *The Moon is Blue*, *High Noon*, *City Lights*, *Limelight*, and we had reveals a success by Gene Kelly and the Marx Brothers. At that time we were a member of a group of theatres called Regional Theatres which is what today is known as Independent I suppose, and Regional Theatres had the release pattern that we've discussed before: first week, second week, etc down to fifth week, which had been it. By the time the film got to Brighton it was no longer great anyway. We had to try something different. My father objected greatly at first because it was going to upset the apppoint, and it did. We blew every appplecart out of business because first of all we told the film companies to go and get excited and secondly we defied the Magistrate Theatres committee. They said for example that we were only allowed to have certain size newspaper ads. So we took double, and they learned as from their column. We said to all a new Franch as Swedish film you had to advertise a bigger. They disagreed, so we eventually broke up. We began negotiating with the Reglers, the Blakes, the Schwarwells and the

Kepfingers and began to show the old Polish and French pictures in a first run house. These distributors by then were having difficulty with the monopoly groups in the city and by this time (1963-64) the Society Theatre had been taken for a Melbourne City Council carpark.

So we survived very well this way, as well as films that were rejected by the major exhibition films of the status that came to mind in this category were *Zerkis the Greek*, *The Mages*, *Satyricon*, *The Day The Fish Came Out*, *Rapture*, *Diary of a Chambermaid*, *The Red Shilling Room*, *The Nanny* and so on. I saw *Zerkis the Greek* for example overseas and was very keen on the film. I got back to Australia and I said to the manager of 20th Century Fox in Sydney "I want *Zerkis the Greek*" and he said, "What's that?" and I said, "It's a new film you have coming out, a Greek film with subtitles," trying to play it down. And he said "Oh well if you want it, great, we don't mind many Greek pictures." I was extremely pleased because Ron Hoyt had also known about the film and by the time it was ready for release Fox would not give it to me, even though I offered a much smaller fee from and a heavy percentage. It was awful. At first they had never heard of it, but the more I offered for it, the more certain they were that it would be a great success so they then proved themselves to be successful operators. So they decided very wisely to open this film in the Athenaeum where it ran two very glorious weeks and then on Mondays through Wednesdays they replaced this *Hayis* suburban effort with the film. After that we went back and instead of offering him 40 or 50 per cent we offered them 15 or 20 per cent, and they gave it to us. We ended up representing 30 per cent of this film's rental world-wide at one stage, even though we had bought it very cheaply. It had been a disaster all over. Later Fox came to us and said if they could use world-wide the advertising that we had produced for this dancing Greek with his hands up in the air. They copied it and then the film, straight on, with the help of the movie.

It is probably true to say it was "*Zerkis the Greek*" that put *Deadly Brighton* on the map as far as a first release house was concerned.

Financially you were well established as a theatre with a different policy by then. But now we had a film that really made money. We struggled with the others, the *Wages of Fear* and the *SEDS*, but now we were able to go to our bank manager and smile. At the next first we announced that a number of other exhibition groups in Australia were being taken over. The Century, the Albany, the Australia and the Caravan were being taken over by bigger concerns which had what I classified at the time as overseas money involved, without which they probably wouldn't have been able to do it.

The influence that this had on our operation was that films that would have been offered to us were now be-

ing offered to a company that had previously operated drive-in theatres and was now operating city theatres. All of a sudden we found ourselves out on a limb. We just didn't have any product. Pictures that were then being offered were just rubbish. So very rapidly we decided that we must go overseas and we must buy our own film because we could see that the monopoly tie-up between two or three big organisations was completely restricting our operation.

At that stage unfortunately we were unable to borrow money. Australia was just getting over the effects of the '62-63 credit squeeze and things were still pretty tight. Other people however were able to raise money. We had plans for own projects and tripes and restaurants and coffee lounges and so on at Brighton and cinema, but we couldn't get the money for it. We could get say \$50,000, but we couldn't get the \$200,000 to \$300,000 that we needed. We too had offers from companies to sell out, and we decided we wouldn't. We had a number of very attractive offers from people who we now deal with from day to day.

In other words the effect of the other monopoly, independent exhibition group in Melbourne, the Village Group, was to make the drive-in city theatres collapse with the fact that they were prepared to sell 33 1/3 per cent of their stock to Greater Union meant that suddenly product became a pressing question for you?

In fact it became almost impossible. I met overseas first in 1968, and I was probably like many readers of *Cinema Papers* who are young filmmakers of today and I was very impressed with what would be thought of as a new, very successful, studio model. I bought films like *Night and Day*, *Las Vegas*, *Romeo, The Cavewoman* and *Nightmare*.

You had never done any film buying before? How did you get about it?

I had been buying films from film companies here and I had been representing them. I was actually given a small team made for me to start with. And yet I had begun my luck. We certainly didn't make money, but we didn't lose any other in the first few years.

About this time *Dead* began the first of its exhibition campaign overseas, opening at the Gaiety Theatre at Bondswomen which after a shaky start has settled down to a comfortable middle of the road policy of (at least sub-release with a number of other Melbourne suburban cinemas *As Ward says* "Today if you wanted to buy it I wouldn't sell it. It has turned out to be a nice little film. It's making a lot of money but it's breaking even." Almost immediately *Dead* began its lasting collaboration with Mark Jacson, who had been associated with the original *Paladium Embassy* complex in Melbourne and the Big Six Suburban drive-in chain, but at that time was operating solely out of the Sandringham Drive-in which was the only non-aligned drive-in theatre

in Melbourne and like the *Dead* was feeling the restrictive release policies of the chain. *Dead* selected and *As Ward says* "The owner of Theatre which after the demise of *MOVIE* found itself without product, and with whom Robert's father had been associated, also aligned themselves with Ward's interest. In quick succession *Ward* opened the *Dead* *Mark Jacson* in *Paladium* and the *Dead* *Cinema First* in *N.S.W.* both old *MOVIE* showmen programming about along Brighton Beach."

A number of people recognized the need of an independent supply organization. Mark, for example, being the only independent drive-in theatre operator in Melbourne couldn't get film. When I say he couldn't get film, what he could get was everyone else's film. It was like drinking an empty bottle of milk. The majors would say, "Save you can have the film but only after we have offered it to Village or Hoyt or Greater Union." Simultaneously the general run of film was becoming a little more arty and sexy. Films like *Women in Love*, *Made in Heaven*, *Midnight Cowboy*, *Last Tango*. They would never have played Hoyt's Theatre five years ago.

In other words the education of cinema audiences had worked against an independent like *Dead*, because now these sorts of films are considered to be commercial movies. The majors take them and you are left with films that everybody would reject. Therefore you need to buy your own movies. Therefore you get together and try to make some sort of deal. And it becomes the larger a question of just finding alternative sub-distributed movies for *Dead* Brighton, but also of finding alternative commercial movies.

We had the independents from all states together at a meeting in 1971. Sub-titles of course are still a problem outside of Victoria and N.S.W. and so we endeavored to buy across the board.

Would it be correct to say that perhaps a more openly commercial attitude to film buying was initiated following the association of Mark and ourselves into Filmways?

Our association with Mark has been very good, in many ways that one he has taught us things about the business that we previously would not have learned otherwise. We learnt that you can't make a distribution on one type of film. You must be general and you must have your basic film or your banner film to pay for the distributors such as *Amateurism of Trunk*, *State of Siege* or *Johnny Got His Gun*. These films are highly praised, but they lose thousands of dollars. *State of Siege* probably cost us \$20,000. *Trunk* more.

At a stage some 18 months ago would Filmways have had at least 50 films in circulation?

It depends on what state you are talking about. I mean if you are talking about states where the stockpiles are strong such as New South Wales or Queensland, yes, that

would probably be the case. If you are talking about Victoria, S.A., W.A., so that is not the case.

Fifty or sixty films would involve a capital outlay of about \$1 million. What an incredible amount of money independent exhibitors have been forced to expend, not to say help from government, in order not to risk themselves as viable independent exhibition-distribution firms.

I can tell you one thing that is of today most of us who put money into Filmways have yet taken a profit. And we have taken a very meagre salary. Every single penny we have earned has gone back (for the purchase of more films).

That is an interesting thing to say Robert, because you are now so something I wanted to consider: independent to the Tariff Board. Report there seems to be a new closeness between yourselves and other distributors. Obviously you have obtained a certain strength, as are you now offering to buy films. Is it a better thing for *Dead*, as far as profit on funds is concerned, to play more exclusively films from other sources which may not be available to you, like "*Blazing Saddles*" with Village for example?

You have earned one completely. I was saying that two or three years ago I would have said we would have now been in a profit position enable us to buy further, to assist in Australian films or to do something else with our money, maybe put it in a Swiss bank and get lost. I don't know. I think that the present Government has completely changed the incentive to expand further film investment in Australian films, or building theatres, or importing films. This is not a political comment. We would like to see an agreement with the banks that is unfavorable. Secondly even if you wanted to borrow money you can't because it isn't there. Thirdly when you start talking to banks or finance groups or banks about films or theatres, they don't want to know you. I understand a fairly major force in the industry is coming there on its own feet in Sydney. You don't make money on that. You are losing money. We are not a high profit industry, we never have been and we never will be. I mean a lot of people get carried away with the film and television industry thinking it's a grandiose bloody.

High expenditure but not high profit? You high expenditure?

Could we talk now specifically about *Dead*'s concerns during the Tariff Board inquiry? Are you experiencing interest as to Filmways' attitude in the question of the breakdown of vertical integration within the industry.

I don't think our attitude has changed very much. I agree they have changed somewhat.

Has there been a rapprochement, a coming together, an attempt to buy the tickets as some people's parts?

Oh you could put it that way, but I think the major companies have changed for more than that, because



Bob Ward standing by films projector which has been modified to accept up to 4000.

they were cross concerned with Congress and Government attitudes to the outcome of the inquiry.

The general attitude seems to be that the recommendations of the Taylor Board Report, as far as the breaking up of the vertically integrated circuits, have been shelved. Bennett for example was suggesting only last Saturday* that this very shelving will now provide open range once again for the multi-national. You obviously feel a little happier than he does.

I was out of Melbourne last weekend and I have still to read Bennett's article, but I do say that though the recommendations of the Report may have been shelved, all of a sudden they have raised their head again.

You are talking about Murphy's new Restrictive Trade Practices Act?

Right. This Act will make certain differences in the film industry, and I think on the whole the film industry

is well aware of its terms.

Are there any films that the Dandy organisation has wanted, that it has been precluded from getting because of financial, distribution agreements of the majors, that you are left now might have been in a position to get as a result of provisions in the Restrictive Trade Practices Bill?

Yes, *The Sing* and *The Great Gatsby*.

Seriously, are Filmways-Deady going to make use of the teeth the new Act provides?

Yes I think so, big Deady and Filmways, because Filmways is a supplier. Let me make it quite clear that Filmways are a completely separate entity from Deady. Farber, our Deady in Sydney is a completely different entity from our Deady in Melbourne, and Melbourne is a completely different entity from Brighton.

But it would be correct to say, would

it not, that you are a common factor in each of these Deady's, and is Filmways?

Yes, but not necessarily a major factor in all. We are not in a position to be a major shareholder in any Deady. If we were any of the whole thing would be quite different.

Filmways unlike any of the American majors operating here, is unlike even Republic because of its association with Warners, has one problem that is endemic to itself, namely that any of the films that it buys, though some may be in packages, are each individual choices. There is no ongoing, continuing source of product.

There could be if we were prepared to tie ourselves to somebody but we didn't want to be ourselves. We have companies now, major companies approaching us to handle their product.

Do you mean major companies that are presently tied in other distributions here?

Yes. Filmways will continue to endeavour to present a single diet of good films, but it is becoming more difficult. Majors world-wide are buying what would previously have been art films and available to us. But the Restrictive Trade Bill is interesting. I wonder whether I will be able to ring up CIC tomorrow and say "Look would you mind if I run *The Sing* at Dandymore and Potent Hill this week simultaneous with city?" I mean why shouldn't I be able to? I certainly would have no objection to exhibiting *Language of Love* or *Love and Laughter* or *Struggled* simultaneously, provided it didn't affect the opening. Now obviously a film like *Kamomekko* screening at two theatres is going to be affected much more than a film like *Flaming Scotland* or *The Sing* at six theatres. The sort of judgment will have to be made.

Filmways can have a release programme larger than most of the other major distributors?

Larger than Columbia and United Artists put together, larger than Fox, as large as CIC. Probably the same as Randolph, but possibly not of such calibre, because we have to pay cash up front for our film, and I don't see any changes here. Maybe we are getting a little bit bigger, maybe the old company is offering as films on percentage that wasn't before, but we are still in a position where we have to pay.

But you are still anxious to remain as independent as ever?

In no way will we change.

Can we move on to production? Filmways have held back in financial resources in production for perhaps a year longer than the Village group here.

Well we didn't have the money. Simple. You don't have to hold back if you haven't got it.

Would it be correct to say that by and large your attitude, at least as far as Filmways was concerned, was that Australian production should be as a

single basis? By that I mean that a lot could be gained by Australian production crews and talent under the guidance of overseas supervision. Yet the irony of the matter was that when Filmways went into their first production they chose a basically American project, with a basically Australian talent, and a basically Australian crew, albeit assisted by a Canadian distribution-exhibition group.

My friend you have known me for a long time. I am sure many times I believe that Australian production should be enhanced by overseas expertise. I always believed that an overseas director and overseas cameraman who had the experience of working on a number of films must be able to come to the country and get Australian sets, education, some learning, freshen up, for example. Now we haven't done this. We did approach a couple of overseas directors but the money they want is probably more than the whole bloody film is worth. So we have to compromise, but we feel that *Eskimo Nell* is not an exclusively Australian project. It was written by a Canadian in 1943 and is known world-wide — it is like *Peter Pan* or *Cinderella* in that regard. We also feel that Richard Franklin, the director, has worked in America, has had experience with American International, with Paramount, Universal and RKO Corgias. He has worked in many capacities, and we believe that he has more experience than any film was than probably anyone else in Australia.

How much did "Eskimo Nell" cost?

Around \$250,000 Australian.

And how much of that was provided by Canada?

Nothing. They provided locations, some facilities and some talent. It was a very big investment, but we are very grateful and appreciative of the services provided. They have received cash from Australia. We met the actors, cameramen and director to Canada to shoot sequences of the film and when Canada pay *Eskimo Nell* from Australia they will pay cash to Australia, to the A.F.C., and to ourselves for the release of that film in Canada.

So at this point of time the Canadian rights are still open?

No they are not open. They have been bought by Cineplex for an amount which will be paid on delivery of the print.

Is it anticipated that "Eskimo Nell" will occupy its production budget from film hire in Australia?

We hope it will multiply 10 by ten. As to overseas, we are considering now whether the film should be dubbed before it is released overseas.

Dubbed into what language?

Into American, into English and out of Australia.

I ask this question by way of comparison with the philosophy of Filmways, the production arm of Village. Their attitude has been that they will

not limit its production which they do not feel as conservative film line executives would satisfy money the production budget in Australia. My own feeling of what you have said to me previously is that your attitudes are slightly different to Heston's, and that "Eskimo Nell", and related other modest Filmmaps productions have been seen like "Care That Air Parts" and "Between Women" in terms of international substance first and Australian afterwards.

No. We have Eskimo Nell will return four times from the overseas market which it will return from Australia, which is very different from what some others have expected.

Where and how will "Eskimo Nell" have its release?

Well that's a problem and we are a little bit concerned I must admit frankly that if I was Hayat or G.U. and someone came to me and said they had that great film for me for Christmas (which is the best box office period of the year), I would say "Fine, providing it's a good film. When can I see it?" And he'd say "Look, I'm terribly sorry, it's not ready yet. But we could show it to you a week before Christmas."

And you haven't got the track record like Heston to say it will be good?

No. I must say we couldn't complain about any company refusing to buy a film they hadn't seen. Every company we have approached has said "Great, I'm glad to see Australian production. Please show it to us when you have got it ready."

By the same token an Australian exhibitor in this point of time has seen "Everlasting Indebted" or "Airport '75".

No, but you are talking different things here, because you know as well as I do that those films are under franchise. It's a CMC film it's under franchise to G.U. or, if it's a Fox film it's under franchise to Hayat, automatically whether they see it or not. The franchise may not be ending, but it has been going for many years.

Whether it's good or bad?

Whether it's good, bad or indifferent.

Whether it will make money or not?

Right. This is where the Australian film is at a disadvantage. Have I made myself clear?

You have made yourself unusually clear, and I am very glad you said that. What sort of ownership arrangement do you prefer? "Eskimo Nell" will get?

Well on the usual side it will get an "M", if not an "NR". On the usual side it would have an "M" problem, but we haven't yet decided what exactly we're going to put on the soundtrack.

How much money have Filmmaps put into "Eskimo Nell"?

Oh around \$70,000. We still have more to put in, production commitments, release costs and advertising. I would say our total commitment



Seated in the wings of the Deady Theatre: Bob, Ann (right), Doreen, My Word Sir and Kathie.

total by the time we are in release will be around \$100,000.

New Filmmaps are already committed to another production. Could you tell us a little about this?

It is called Goodbye Norma Jean and is filming at Town. It is the story of Marilyn Monroe between the ages of 12 and 16. Lenny Burroughs, an American international veteran is directing. We considered filming in Australia, but it would have been much more expensive. In the case, and an another co-production which we were considering with Carlo Ponti, our partners told us that the Australian costings were a joke. Norma Jean is being produced in the U.S. for \$1,500,000 and in Australia it would have cost \$A275,000 and then it 35mm colour. Because as America the location is the set, but we would have to build big sets at great cost.

It is an unfortunate state of affairs, as far as Australian production is concerned, that virtually each member of an Australian crew has film-by-film over the last 18 months descended at least \$30 to \$50 more than the film he did before. Now how are we going to stop this? What sort of breaks can be applied?

What sort of breaks can you apply—economic breaks. I mean when there is work, there is work, when there is no work, there is no work, and unfortunately these people don't seem to understand an alternative. We are looking at a third project at the moment, a 35mm colour film to be shot in Australia for around \$200,000, basically with A.F.C. participation. There is also a fourth project in the Philippines which would be partly funded from America, the Philippines and Australia. But I am not in a position to comment as negotiations are still proceeding.

Are Filmmaps likely to be releasing

any Australian films that have been made over the last 12 or 18 months which they weren't financially involved in?

Well we are handling the world-wide release of Sandy Shady's *Some Black* will be screening the film at MIFED this month and we will be putting it heavily at Cannes next year.

Could we talk a little about censorship? Censorship at the moment seems almost of a standard. On the one hand we have the federal organisation which seems to be following with one film through, and is indeed leaning towards medium-term. The major distributors and exhibitors seem to be saying, "Go any further, let in hard-core, and we'll lose our system of uniform censorship. The states will withdraw their federal defences of the censorship power."

Yet Queensland in fact has already done this and has banned "Exotic Adventures of Zorro", "Sun Ash", etc. Filmmaps has obvious memberships like "Nationalist Chaps" still banned, but is so much to saying it doesn't think "Deep Throat" or "Devil in Miss Jones" should get through. What is Filmmaps' present attitude?

Our attitude is this: we feel that the film industry is an industry to entertain. Now whether it be artistically entertaining or commercially entertaining is quite separate. But we feel that the industry as a whole can't afford to accept Deep Throat, Miss Jones, Behind the Green Door and films like this. On the other hand there are movies like *Panorama Blue*, and though I saw only 15 minutes of it, I didn't find it objectionable. I think by and large the censor is being reasonable, but there are fairly unpredictable in this area at the moment.

Do you think censorship decisions should be based on precedent, in other

words if film A shows a man ejaculating and is passed, then film B and C with a man ejaculating should also be passed?

I don't think so because a hard-core film with a man ejaculating can be very different to an erotic film of a man ejaculating. I think this is the whole problem with censorship. When do you draw the line? How old you draw a line? I am relatively happy with the composition of the Censorship Board and Board of Review at the moment.

Recently? The Board of Review apparently rejected 11 out of the 12 submitted by Filmmaps for "Wed Dreams".

Well with that one they were worried about the title. They want us to change it, but have the hell out you change the title when a film has got 13 acquiesces. It would cost more to change the titles than it cost to produce the film.

What sort of film do Filmmaps consider "Wed Dreams" to be?

Oh well I consider it to be a very intellectual, unentertaining and artistic film. It is not a piece of cheese because we are not interested in that sort of film. We have never released a film at the Star or the Albany.

Have Filmmaps got any other films that they consider sufficiently artistic to be suitable for the Star or the Albany, but which are encountering censorship problems?

No. We do have *Natalonia Chaps*, *Country Curries* and *The Snake* (drawn from Harry Novak banned). They are probably a little bit above the Star, probably Roca or more.

Is Filmmaps fighting these decisions?

Not really, what can you do to fight? Language of Love was an intelligent modern film that you cut light on



The specially designed production team of their Brighton house. From left: Katherine Cameron, Bob, Sue, Gordon, Fred (all top right)



The Dearly English which opened in 1941

appeal constructively, but those?

What about the "Language of Love" itself? Do you predict that it will be passed by the censor?

Yes. I think the Censorship Board now realizes that there is an area of film type which can be regarded as sex education films.

Could we talk about the future for Filmways-Dandy, first of all as regards exhibition? With Colfax Street now more than a year old you are about to open up in Lonsdale Street. What about in Sydney with the Licensing Regulations relaxed?

First of all who said that the Licensing Regulations have been relaxed? They haven't. No way have they at all. Unofficially maybe, but officially no. Talking about involvement in Melbourne, yet we are going into Lonsdale Street. We will be opening in November. We are in with Village for two seasons. One is that we believe that it is not the most prime position in Melbourne, secondly we believe that by being associated with Village we will have a greater visibility of product than we would have had if we had gone in by ourselves. Now the Capital Theatre group have gone in with Village in two theatres in Swanston Street, so the old South Seas Restaurant premises, and we think that we may have reached the maximum seating for the moment in the city. As for Sydney we are discussing with other partners. As far as the South Yarra complex is concerned, and it is again in doubt because of the current economic situation, we will also be in association with Village.

Can we talk more about Sydney?

We understand that Sydney is a disaster area. The multiplexes have been in charge for so long that Sydney theatres are extremely run down. We are trying to get in, as one Village Cinema Next was the big in there for a bit, but a small leg in, a waiting of the foot.

How well have the feet become?

Very, very dry. It is a partnership between ourselves and Sollich and Sharpe. The partnership is going very well. But it is one theatre where we should have 10. It is likely that within the next 12 months we will have other Sydney outlets. As for the other states we are happy with our releasing associates. We are not a big multi-national company and we wouldn't attempt to control people from thousands of miles away.

Could we talk a little about the distribution future of Filmways? Are Filmways likely to continue as a film-film house or are they likely to make attempts to attract certain franchises?

I will tell you the honest truth. We have been trying to take over CIC, but we could only go to \$35 million and they said they wanted \$35 million.

What sort of trends are Filmways going to continue over the next year or so, as far as the split between artistic

and commercial releases is concerned?

Artistic releases are worrying as considerably, especially the reaction to sub-titled films. It is bad in Melbourne and much worse in Sydney. For example at Brighton we now have a film called The Gentle Sex. We originally started off the whole week with the sub-titled print. The other film Gaily Used Fracas (sub-titled anyway) and there is no English version (not available). I don't like to run two sub-titled films on the same programme, so we tried to run a sub-titled version of Gentle Sex on Monday to Thursday and an English version on Friday and Saturday. Monday to Thursday we got abuse from people who have seen the film at the weekend and recommended their friends to see it. A week ago we saw English for the same week and we didn't get a complaint. So what's the answer?

I don't know what the answer is, but the Silver Complex for example is not losing money.

Neither are we.

The Kital positively glorifies in the fact that it plays films in original version.

We try to show sub-titled movies when they are available, but I believe that the interest of the public has waned as far as they are concerned.

Could we conclude by talking briefly about trends in Australian production over the next 12 months? Is the Australian industry likely to go under through lack of outlets?

Not through lack of outlets, but perhaps because of cost. How can you establish an industry here where costs are already so expensive? I think the most important thing that I could say in this interview is that the Australian film industry, if it wants to establish a future for itself, must learn to live realistically. Even before the lifting of import duty on release prints we had decided to have the release prints of Nell done at MGM, Lakes, Culver City. The American cost to be a foot, the Australian 15c. I feel you work it out. And moreover Australian labs are notoriously inferior quality.

And who owns the labs here?

I wouldn't know. I understand it's an overseas company.

Anyone we know?

No. I don't know. Somehow I just can't remember the name.

Thank?

Thank?

Anything else you would like to say Robert?

I think there is still a lot of Irish luck in exhibition interests in Australian product despite the enormous success of Alvin Purple and Rasta. I think that our own experience on Ealing's Nell will bear this out. Maybe the film will be released. I don't know. But the point is that Filmways demonstrated their faith in it. We have put our money where our mouth is. ■

EXTRA

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GENRE

A REVIEW

Bruce Hoddson

The concept of genre in literature has been used at different times for both proscriptive and descriptive purposes. In cinema, genre generally has been employed rather crudely as a means of classifying the assembly line output of Hollywood with its built-in impulse to reproduce a successful formula. In this context genre becomes a class of films drawing on a tradition with a set of conventions.

A test case for the value of genre as a tool of analysis is provided by the most durable of film types, the Western. In the early fifties Robert Warshaw and Andre Bazin wrote seminal essays each seeking to define its essence.

Warshaw, a critic of popular culture, recognized the movies' tendency "to create fixed dramatic patterns that can be repeated indefinitely with a reasonable expectation of profit." Conventions imposed themselves as the general consciousness and became accepted vehicles of a particular set of attitudes and a particular aesthetic effect. That originality is only successful as an infusion of the conventions from within intensifying emotional experience, rather than fundamentally altering it from without. Implicit here is the belief that there is some describable fixed essence of the genre and this be found in the figure of the Westerner.

The Westerner is the last gentleman and the movies, which over and over again tell us story, are probably the last art form in which the concept of a genre means as strongly.

Warshaw saw *The Virginian* (1930), based on Owen Wister's novel, as an archetypal Western movie (for Scarface, Little Caesar and Public Enemy were archetypal Gangster films) while *The*

On-ice Incident (1943) is an "anti-Western" insofar as it presents us with a modern social drama employing the Westerner setting as a backdrop. *High Noon* goes further in grafting a social dimension on to an essentially Western drama. *The Westerner*, John Ford's key Western *Sagebrush* and *My Darling Clementine* show an ambivalent preoccupation with style and the latter, a superficial concern with historical reconstruction surrounding the outline of the legend of the lone Westerner into the sentimental legend of rural America. Warshaw saw this ambivalence tendency carried to its extreme in *Shane* (1953). He explained the durability of the form in terms of the audience's special character: film's ability to render the physical differences between one object and another and one actor and another. He then sorts off into speculation about the role of violence in popular culture finding in the Westerner, the man with a gun, a distillate of cultural fascination with the style of violence, the

erotic image of a man which expresses itself most clearly in violence. The Westerner is an archaic figure "who is there to remind us of the possibility of style as an act which has put us itself the burden of pretending that style has no meaning."

If Warshaw proposed the Western's essence is the archetypal Westerner and the formal simplicity of the "B" Western Andy Davis showed greater awareness of the genre's flexibility and its relative to authenticity in the context of evolving narrative patterns. In his essay on the Evolution of the Language of the Cinema, Davis saw a classical perfection attained in both Hollywood and France, a peak of the entanglement of different kinds of drama developed in its theories (though inherited in part from the silent cinema) and the stabilization of technical progress. Like Warshaw he considered that the major genres had evolved clearly defined rules of content and form capable of pleasing a mass audience, with well-defined styles of photography and editing perfectly



The Indian dance from John Ford's *Stagecoach*: a Western of "classical perfection"

adapted to the subject matter, a complete harmony of image and sound. Of the genres he identified — Comedy, Drama and Western, Crime and Gangster, Psychological and Social drama, Horror or Fantasy and The Western — he wrote in greatest length about the Western. He recognized the flexibility of its iconography: action, the frontier town and landscape were by no means the unique province of the Western. The formal attributes he saw as simply signs or symbols of its profound reality, namely the myth ("the focus of civil against the larger of the tract coast") and its dialectical relationship with the fact of history particularized in specific dramatic plots. The durability and universal appeal of the Western were to be found in the ethos of the epic and even tragedy, the epic style of myth and landscape deriving its real meaning only from the reality which underlies and justifies it. Unlike *Wintrow* he did not find the contact of the Western to its base — the "B" picture — as a point of classical perfection exemplified by John Ford's *Stagecoach*. To him the postwar Westerns of Ford — *My Darling Clementine* and *Hill Apache* — introduced certain baroque embellishments: a technical formalism and the distortion of history to the level of subject when it had previously been present only formally. He saw that film as giving the Western to its full extent of its accessible limits while subsequent "new Westerns" (the "new" Western) (inspired by *The Gun-High Incident* and inspired by *Duel in the Sun*, *High Noon* and *Shane* were seen as reactions born of consciousness on the part of the filmmakers to the classical Western's simplicity of form and content. Consciously aware of its limits they looked elsewhere for some additional interest: aestheticism, sociology, psychology, politics and mysticism, all qualities which Ford declined to bring "foreign to the genre." While adopting essentially the same conservative stance as *Wintrow*, Berra could compromise, within his classical model, giving embellishments in the postwar Western films like *Red River*, *Pursued*, *Along the Coast Divide*, *The Gunfighter*, *Across the Wide Missouri*, *Westward the Women*, *Rio Grande*, *Silver Lode*, *Ran for Cover*, *Apache*, *Man Without a Star* and *The Naked Spur* were based originally on the old dramatic and apocalyptic themes which were enriched "from within" with more individualized characterization and complex relationships while the elaboration of style was not dwell upon, was not "over aestheticized." Admitting these embellishments to his classical model seems to run Berra into logical problems where the line to be drawn between criticism and artistic embellishment? Berra confirms evolution with

description. His notion of classical perfection is no evaluative term nor a descriptive one.

The largely consensus thinking of Berra and *Wintrow* has been dwelt upon at some length because intertwined through a miscellany to distill the dual form from the great mass of films both above and below the surface of critical acceptance are at least three basic elements: iconography, myth and the relationship between them and history.

Iconography though described as frontier, recurring visual imagery, action to subject matter or meaning rather than form (i.e. the expression of themes or concepts not only by objects but also through events (e.g. the chase, the daylight in the main street)) iconography does not shape the narrative so much as provide a unifying context and a point of access for the mass audience. It is a means of dialoguing one type of film from another and providing a framework in which the story can be told. For the individual filmmaker it can be a springboard for achieving stylistic unity through "an efficient, local and forward step-by-step" iconography can become dense when relating its essentially schematic content.

Berra and *Wintrow* sought the essence of the Western in myth, though Berra's emphasis was on aesthetic qualities while *Wintrow's* was an sociological one. Alwayne raises the question of whether figures, icons or style, can be called mythical. It suggests that idealized characters and stereotyped plots are called mythological when in fact they are simply iconographical. Icons are thus "a condensation of topical allusions rather than the recurrence of ancient narratives." To Alwayne it is possible icons rather than timeless patterns which generate investigative imagery. He makes an allowance for the middle ground between mythical myth and iconography which seems particularly relevant to the Western. Norliff Fry's notion of *mythological myth* is "the tendency to suggest implicit mythical patterns in a world more closely associated with human experience," expressed through the fictional media of romance and the high romance whose characteristic forms are the epic and tragedy. Myth can be seen as standing at one extreme with naturalism at the other. In between is the issue of romanticism: the tendency to display myth in a human dimension and yet, in contrast to "realism," to generalize and isolate in an idealized direction. Berra, though referring to a specific period in the American Cinema (the late forties), makes a suggestion which has general value too, the interaction between iconography and naturalism. The conventional world becomes physically convincing on film while the known



Musical scenes begin to emerge in *Stagecoach*, with Clara Bow as the prostitute and John Wayne (Klipspringer)

world can become the corner of iconographical meaning. This is a most useful elaboration of *Wintrow's* final reference to the role of the medium itself in rendering physical events in fictional modes: a highly conventionalized world can be given specificity. This is the power of the film and its potential for restoring the mythic dimension particularly in its potential for inflecting movement themes and situations and for setting up opposing categories as shown early by Griffith, latterly taken up by filmsonian continuums. Thus the movie, more than any other medium, can, as John Ford suggests, "artificially the conflicts and adventures of a collective anguish compressing, transfiguring and objectifying scenes of distress and plucking which society cannot bear to confront directly and they can appear only as mythic reality as a common level of consciousness can bear."

It is clear that there has been an assertion of latent criticism toward myth and iconography which filmmakers own explicit and personal, but it is also clear that this is not exclusive to the Western even if most overtly exemplified by that genre. It applies the whole range of American cinema: confliction and stylization of domestic situations.

Andrew Sarris defended the application of the auteur theory to the American Cinema as a means of recognizing the trees in the forest but there is

also the inherent danger of losing the geography of the West altogether by focusing on the configurations of individual trees or, alternatively, a clump of trees may obscure the ways in which other shapes resemble yet differ from each other.

It is for example, difficult to establish many meaningful links between two Westerns as disparate as Henry King's *Jesse James* (1939) and Philip Kaufman's *The Great Northfield Minnesota Raid* (1972) except for the latter conscious evocation of earlier traditions in the insularity between fact and legend, dislocation and narrative time, the idealized earlier version of the legend has more appropriate connection with thirteen historical references.

The American cinema has, from the beginning, worked on audience expectations and emotions very directly through dramatic narrative structures involving the arousal of identification and efforts. This has been achieved through the re-enactment of situations which involve audience recognition drawn from their own sense of extra-dramatic reality (e.g. as family melodrama or social drama) or from their awareness of dramatic tradition (e.g. in the Western). It is a cinema which bleeds "reflexes" (the credibility of contrived surfaces) with the formalized discourse through conventionalized narrative patterns or codes. Yet within this product (which is not unique, but absolutely central, to the American cinema) is an ungratified responsiveness to audience mood. While *Warrior* uses the Western and Gangster genre in relatively static terms Lawrence Alloway charts some of the changes in the action genre over a twenty-year period, the back-pis being the very typical events are compounded with traditional plots. Furthermore he suggests continuities between themes, fairs and technology though not in any very systematic way.

If the idea of the West has become a repository for myth the historical West has provided not only scenographic potential but a set of circumstances which aligns the mythic dimension properly. The concentration on the period 1835-1900, only about one quarter on the actual time span of the western movement, is not explained merely by the turbulence of these years but by the fact that it was a period in which options were gradually closing thus providing a fertile ground for a striking ideological interplay on the idea of the West as religious god of wilderness, e.g. West/East; popular/agricultural/industrialization, West as garden/West as pasture, garden/desert, sanctity/corruption.¹

Believe a blend of history and popular forms (Victorian melodrama, the dime novel, the Wild West show) played out the American obsession with individualism and community, violence and law and order. These obsessions are not the special province of the Western yet what is significant is the flexibility of the form (or as Kravis puts it, "story forms") around as idea both tangible and metaphysical, historical and mythic. As has been pointed out elsewhere history can provide a base for myth, speculation and action fairs, Indian and cowboy anti-Westerns while the essentially archaic world can readily provide the setting for archetypal fables, tragedies, romances or juvenile Westerns.² Rather than fleeing an existence we find an amalgam of elements which do not impinge too directly on our experience. Even in the most clearly delineated of the genres flexibility and change is the key, not rigidity or classical perfection.

In the character the Western was dominated by the romantic mode: historical romance in the relatively few big budget Westerns and personified in the shockingly idealized Westerner of the juvenile Western's hero/active model. The significance of *Stagecoach* (1939) is the way Ford brought an acute awareness to a group of stock types a false sense of rhythm to the scene and an attention to detail in setting and characterization, leading the ring of traits to its own idealized, ungratified, one-dimensional character types. If Ford provided



Ben McGonigal (Cory Corcoran) waves hello to the cowboy audience from the wagon in *The Covered Wagon* (1923) from the program of the movie drawn from David Robert's *The Cowboy Cattle Co.*



The Northern archetypal (Mal Ender) poses beside the Indian nation leader of western Chad Miller (R. G. Armstrong) and Charles (Clay Curry) in Philip Kaufman's *The Great Northfield, Minnesota Raid*.

of the impetus for elaboration it was the combination of a number of Western directors and technicians which pushed the Western in separate but intersecting directions. The outlines of historical context were filled out and given truly epic proportions by the location of a psychological dimension into characterization — a sense of characters' motivations and individuality within standardized roles — and to the more imaginative deployment of scenography. Romance was given to the epic and specialized the celebration of the establishment of modernism in the wilderness. An alternative direction was elaboration of the archetypal elements in an archaic world in the form of the fable and morality plays. The interplay of both the historical perspective (closing of options) and archetypal elements ten-

tatively created a magic potential brought to light by *The Gunfight* (1950) which used the realistic drive backdrop of the town to highlight the archetypal position of the fighter Anthony Mann's preoccupation with "a string of conventional conflict of power and duty" shifted the emphasis to the archetypal concepts of individualism and community. Fifteen remakes exemplified by Ray, Aldrich and Ford conclude with elegant elements in the late 1950s and early 1960s in films like *Man of the West* and *Guns in the Afternoon*. A measure of Ford's stature in the way he ranges culturally across the whole spectrum in *The Searchers* (1956).

If it was the western directors (John Ford, Henry Hathaway, Howard Hawks, King Vidor, William Wellman, Henry King) and established



James Taylor in *The Dinner at Masha's* (Hillman's *Two Lane Blacktop*). Is he 'born composed of disparate elements'?

scriptwriters (Dudley Nichols, W. R. Burnett, Nunnally Johnson) who enjoyed a vogue, it was the new generation of directors (Anthony Mann, Robert Aldrich, Nicholas Ray, Richard Brooks, Budd Boetticher, Samuel Fuller, Anthony Mann, Phil Karlson and Sam Peckinpah) and writers (Paul Nupur, Philip Yordan, Charles Schnee, Delmer Daves, Bert Kennedy and James Webb) who gave expression to a more contemporary sensibility, a shift away from idealized westerns and the inviolable Western hero. The sense of urbanized consciousness, of vulnerability becomes stronger as the Westerner endures a series of tests. The fluidity of traditional construction becomes more apparent as conventions are played upon and bent, the narrative mode finding expression, not through the ideal hero-to-been black million opportunist, but in a frustration with the hero's fate; formulaic routines, though generally adhered to, are composed as a reflex of the industry. The realising of contemporary social issues on traditional plots and situations tend to distance the form if too overt (*The Cowboy Incident*, *High Noon*, *Shane*) but enabled it all imaginatively (re)produced. New emotions first seemed to casually use the open world to obliquely plot out moral and social issues (*Redman Riding Alone*, *Little Women*, *Welcome to Hard Times*, *No Name on the Bullet*). It is not so much a question of the 'outdoors' and the 'western' elements as one of its focus. If the filmmaker could dispense the recognized codes of interest he could also remain on the level of the action while articulating it in line with current tastes, violent consciousness and the chase could be given more urgency, atmosphere could be more diffused through denser textures and jolting rhythms (cinema angle and editing). The discovery of means to give a topical edge to traditional plots is at the point where genres emerge into a homogeneous process (just as lack of elementarity changed them in earlier times into the society of the frontier stage and then of mass film until we achieve sufficient to sustain interest for a film). The Western as certain potential parallel film motif and family melodrama in the forties and early fifties and with dislocations in ordered narrative sequence, the nemesis or reque-

stion of values already understood or questioned in the system and scenarios. The shift from the mode of romance and high romantic towards that of the low realistic and the ironic spans the three decades.

Elsewhere discrepancies at least two variants of the melodramatic tradition within the essentially homogeneous practice of the American cinema. In the actual genres (e.g. the Western and Adventure film, the Gangster film and its film noir and pre-war offshoots) central conflicts are necessarily couched and projected into direct action. As a result, a lack of delivery, Western chase or sensory stage and a criminal investigation of lead themselves to psychological idealized representations of the human inner dimension. The hero is defined dynamically at the centre of a continuous movement not only from sequence to sequence but within the individual shot. In domestic melodrama, on the other hand, the world (the confines of social responsibility) endures the characters forcing them to look inwardly rather than out simply mindfully. 'They are each other's sole referent, there is no world outside to be acted on, no reality that could be defined or assumed unambiguously'.¹⁴

Seeking to delineate the underlying mechanisms of Hollywood narrative as dramatic (as opposed to lyrical or conceptual) seems to reform the notion of classical narrative but in the context of an audience-based aesthetic with ideological implications. It affords the potential for seeing Alamo's links between legitimacy and changing forms and Babin and Warshaw's more static notions of popular mythology. Iconography is also assessed from the property being assigned a more dynamic role in the interaction between setting, milieu and audience recognition, narrative codes and mythology. Film-makers' manipulation of narrative structure and appearance can be seen directly related to prevailing social systems. The dominant characterization of the action genre is in a sense too neat and over-simplified (though he was referring to a specific period). One begins to look at the individual films and make comparative assessments over time: the fluidity of forms becomes more apparent i.e. we can speak confidently of basic mechanisms only in a given period. This process seems nonetheless central to the relevance of genre as a technique. Declaration of a safe space implicit in the notion of genre requires the definition of a general practice or language. The relationship between practice and context, expressive means and their utilization, evidence, industry and filmmaker is a central and complex one.

The actualization of sound in the thirties resulted in an ordered and highly conventionalized sequence structure which employed the regional and temporal flexibility afforded by striking an enlightening of the dramatic continuum. The dramatic elements of the pay versus entertainment paralleling the understanding of the efficacy of the basic individual — found formal conventions in stark dislocation of ordered sequence, e.g. the use of more accurate angles and disposal compositions, less idealized stage protagonists, black looserness or chromatic studio lighting. Nevertheless dislocation was not too disorientating. The employment of a visual discontinuity (change of angle or distance of shot) was still a dramatic element of continuity of story-line in the dramatic build-up of a scene. The adoption of cinematography (even properties in the early fifties) seemed likely to be dis-empowering along in favour of the 'type' image (character in environment) but filmmakers soon found that they could successfully employ fast-cutting even without the more flexible compromise of the wide screen. The tendency in recent years has been to compound discontinuities rather than 'bolton' whole shots in the sense of the visual discontinuity tends to be supplanted by visual discontinuity. Not that this is a uniquely contemporary practice. What is new is its emergence as something approaching a structural concern:

employed with varying effectiveness in a number of films since the mid-sixties from *Mystery One* and *Point Blank* and *Cleopatra*, *Strawberry Statement*, *Prehensile*, *Point Blank*, *Medium Cool*, *Boxer Bertha*, *Drive*, *He Said*, *Miss Street*, *Sale Place*, *King of Marvin Gardens*, *Breaker McClellan*, *Deliverance*, to *Westerns like The Great Northfield Massacre*, *Raid*, *McCabe & Mrs Miller*, *The Colporteur*, *Cattle Country*, *Avant*, *Just Dusk*, *Sweet & Gossamer*, *The Wild Bunch* and *Pat Garrett and Billy the Kid*. One could equally consider the use of focus (35 mm and telephoto for wide-angle shooting out of the image) as the greater sensitivity of film stock (film range) in producing realism and lowering or enhancing sequence patterns and textures. One is structural level a device like the journey, formerly used as a means of externalizing the central drive of the hero, has been drained of its centre and has become a loose compound of disparate elements increasingly open-ended and subliminal (*Raise the Hawk People*, *Two-Lane Blacktop*, *Red Canyon*).

The looker and the underworld can 'become the representation of collective dreaming, can make a paradise of the past, the order makes a hell of the present'.¹⁵ If this alludes to the origins of the appeal of the Western and Gangster film then we are now following a path whereby filmmakers self-consciously attempt to invert traditional values through form or structural and iconography. The journey to numbness and the rendering of causality centered 'realistic' analysis.

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- Barthes, *Essays on the Language of Cinema*.
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"The National Film Archive is more than an institution. It is the manifestation of an idea, and one of the most remarkable, and least remarked, cultural developments of the last 40 years has been the fertilization of this idea, spontaneously and simultaneously, throughout the world."

Ernest Lindgren, Curator of the National Film Archive, London, in 1970.

The Edmondson Report

FILM ARCHIVES

During the latter half of 1973, film librarian Ray Edmondson undertook a five-month study tour of overseas archives, sponsored by the Film and Television School and the National Library, to enquire into their operations, standards and techniques. He visited major archives world-wide and participated in the first international school for film archivists in Berlin. It was the first study project in this field ever undertaken by an Australian.

The results of this research, and recommendations for future growth of film archive work in Australia, are contained in a 170-page report submitted to the Film School in September.

Much of the report is taken up with description of individual overseas archives. Because of space this has been condensed here and only the main conclusions have been extracted.

Ray Edmondson joined the National Library in 1968 as film reference librarian and in January 1973 was appointed to head the new film archive unit within the Film Division. Over the last six years he has supervised the growth and organization of the Library's film archive, during a period of considerable expansion and an awakening of interest in Australia's film history.

THE ARCHIVE CONCEPT

This year, when Henri Langlois, deity of the Cinémathèque Française, received an Oscar at the annual Academy Awards presentation in Hollywood — the first time the work of film archivists in preserving the cultural heritage of film has been so recognized — film archivists might be said to have come of age to the eyes of the film production industry. Essentially film archivists exist to preserve motion pictures as an art form, as social and historical records and as the source films to ensure their continued accessibility to the public.

The term "preserve" encompasses a number of specialized operations all of which are necessary to assure a film's continued survival for as long

definite period. In this respect archives differ from other types of film collections such as circulating libraries, stock-shop libraries and commercial distribution libraries whose purposes are to distribute or disseminate rather than preserve.

As an essential adjunct to the central activity, archives maintain auxiliary collections of film advertising material (such as stills, posters and press sheets), production material and film transcripts. Such films and documentation are continuously available for study and usage by the public in general as well as by individuals with specific interests such as film-makers, historians, sociologists and students of film art. It is the function of an archive to promote the demands of preservation and accessibility and to ensure that the material that is described subject to the exigencies of commercial exploitation remains permanently accessible to those who seriously wish to study it.

Film archives first came into existence in the 1920's in response to the realization that, for

practical and commercial reasons, many important films would cease to exist unless impartial and stable public bodies could ensure their preservation and could establish sufficient good links with the film industry to ensure its co-operation with this task.

In 1938, four of these pioneer bodies joined together to form FIAP which today has some forty members throughout the world; they differ widely in size and affluence but they subscribe to a common philosophy and a practical code of operation which have enabled them, in the eyes of most film industries, to hold their integrity of purpose and methods.

FIAP Statutes, (article 5), define the objects of its members as:

- (a) the collection and preservation of films, cinematographic material objects and the documents relating to them and
- (b) as far as possible, the projection of the films and the exhibition of the

documents, non-commercial, and for historic, educational, and artistic purposes.

The aims of IFAF, as set out in article 1 of its Statutes, are:

- (a) to promote the preservation of the artistic and historic heritage of the cinema; and to bring together all organizations devoted to this end;
- (b) to facilitate the collection and international exchange of films and documents relating to cinematographic history and art, for the purpose of making them as widely accessible as possible;
- (c) to develop co-operation between its members;
- (d) to promote the development of cinema art and culture.

By an active programme of conferences, publications and inter-archival co-operation, IFAF has pioneered the archive concept and established its practical validity throughout the world.

As it exists overseas, the film archive is a specialised institution dedicated to the preservation of what, in the judgment of its specialized staff, has enduring artistic and socio-historical value from among the world's vast output of motion pictures and television programming. It has become to the film medium what art galleries are to painting and sculpture, both a guardian of inherently valuable materials placed in its trust, and a showplace, dissemination centre and study resource.

OBSERVATIONS^{*}

AUTONOMY

While most archives are funded, partially or wholly, by government sources their legal status or constitution varies somewhat from country to country. Some are government departments or authorities, their employees being classified as public servants, others were set up as foundations or public cultural institutions aided by — but not administratively attached to — their governments. Still others were private initiatives receiving support from a variety of public and private sources.

In the course of time each archive has established formal and informal links with the film industry, with government and cultural bodies so that it effectively functions as the national film repository and study centre. In several countries — including Norway, Denmark, Sweden and Britain — the archive's national role and responsibilities have been specifically established by legislation, with statutory power in some cases to acquire films or other archival materials, and its relationship to other film and cultural bodies defined. Elsewhere, where this step has not been taken archives have developed relationships which give them such recognition as the National Film Archive, London, for instance, officially preserves Government-produced films (through an arrangement with the Public Records Office) and its wide ranging acquisition policy is evidence of its central archival role in the U.K.

From discussions with archive heads and senior staff it was clear that archives jealously guarded this high degree of autonomy. The following reasons were some that were suggested to me:

- (i) It placed the ultimate responsibility for the preservation of a nation's film heritage squarely in the hands of dedicated specialists — where it belonged.

- (ii) It affirmed the fact that film archive work was a coherent field of its own, requiring its own breed of specialists.
- (iii) It affirmed public and governmental recognition of the importance of film as an form and communications medium, important enough to be treated in its own right.
- (iv) The archive was the recognizable embodiment of the nation's film tradition.



Lutz Grotz, National Film Archive, Berlin, is in charge of the film archive. He is standing in front of a building which houses the archive's collection of films.

STAFF

The one characteristic most commonly in evidence among archive staff was a personal interest in film. Not infrequently this was accompanied by an encyclopaedic knowledge of some aspect of cinema (which found steady application in day-to-day work), collectively, I found, archives numbered among their personnel many noted film writers and critics. The characteristic was striking, coupled with the obvious dedication of key staff members to a specialized field it left to each archive a unique atmosphere which I had not encountered in Australia, or in other film organisations.

Most archives patterned not to employ film scholars and academic colleagues because of possible conflict between their personal interests and the archive's acquisition activities. At the same time they maintained close contact with them through the archive's acquisition program.

Few people presently engaged in film archive activity in Australia are able to envisage it as a career, since no adequate career structure exists there. It is an incentive in developing skills and expertise in evidence overseas. Australians presently working in the field have varied qualifications — some have film industry backgrounds, others (as at the National Library of Australia) are required to have librarianship qualifications. This means, in practice, that few people come into the work with a background in film aesthetics or history, and sometimes come with no film knowledge at all. Good conditions conducive to the development of specialised career staff are established, Australian archives will lack the professional authority possessed by their overseas counterparts within the film world and the cultural community.

FILM SELECTION

Overall film selection by Australian archival bodies is unco-ordinated and piecemeal. Selection is based on each body's own frame of reference and its financial limitations, because of the lack of qualified staff there is always a danger that material will be selected or rejected on the basis of unhelpful personal responses, and that important material will therefore not be preserved at all by any archival body. There appears to be no co-ordinating committee (as in London), capable of maintaining a broad overview of the field, operating in conjunction with any archival activity in Australia.

There is no statutory deposit legislation in this country, and no single archival body has defined a comprehensive and firm policy to preserve Australia's national film heritage. Large areas of film and television production have yet to be properly surveyed with a view to preserving all significant material. Since no archival body presently has the authority or capacity to responsibly undertake this work an important cultural

resource is in great danger of being dissipated. What is true for Australian film is undoubtedly even more true for the preservation of a nation's material in Australia.

Because of the passage of time, early films, in particular silent material from before 1930, now largely are in the hands of private collectors with whom it is essential that archives develop close personal contacts to win the collector's trust and to gain access to his collections. The rarity and historical importance of this material makes it a vital arm of negotiation and perhaps the one which archives trust the greatest allegiance.

PRESERVATION

To do a good job preserving films, overseas archives generally hold:

- (a) invest in suitable processing and maintenance equipment and storage facilities;
- (b) obtain and train staff who can provide the necessary care and expertise;
- (c) establish practical rules and procedures necessary to safeguard technical standards and ensure accuracy;
- (d) develop its own techniques and equipment to undertake repair, restoration and printing to the extent that existing film industry resources are unable to meet this need;
- (e) acquiring essential elements of technical advances which may improve preservation methods.

There is no organisation in Australia where all essential preservation standards and methods are observed. Few bodies with a declared preservation responsibility fully recognize them or are even aware of them. Some (as take the National Library as an example) observe the basic physical requirements and are aware of the principles, but lack the necessary physical resources and accumulated staff knowledge. Positive steps to define standards and preservation policies, and to implement them, need to be taken by a national body as a second priority of national cultural importance.

STORAGE FACILITIES

Temperature and humidity controlled storage facilities to national archival standards, whether for motion picture or colour-dye film, do not exist in Australia. Their construction is a vital and urgent necessity if the preservation of Australia's national film heritage is to be seriously undertaken. The reconstruction and training of staff for

* In the following section overseas observations have been set out in outline type and observations of Australian conditions have been set out in outline.

the proper storage, maintenance and security of the films themselves in an equal necessity.

RESTORATION

Capabilities for film restoration in Australia are largely restricted to technical machinery available at commercial laboratories, which have neither designed nor installed for the purpose of handling historical and deteriorating extrinsic films. Such work is, in any case, commercially uneconomic. To provide a facility equivalent with overseas archives, Australia needs specialised restoration and printing machinery and the skills for expert manual repair and restoration of film.

PRINTING AND LIAISON WITH LABORATORIES

There is no specialised printing equipment in Australia built specifically for archival purposes, and often the quality of archival work is reliant upon the goodwill of commercial laboratories — for which it is frequently uneconomic — and the limitations of their equipment. Quality control of the finished work is again largely in the laboratories' hands, being dependent on the time, staff and equipment which the archival body cannot afford (nor may not have available for pre-project checking). Such checking is regarded as a vital archival responsibility, a service which should not, if possible, be done outside the archive itself. An archival body in Australia undertakes at a major of monitor the competence, integrity of its printers and assure films as a safeguard against deterioration. Consequently the chemical state of most preservation material held by Australian bodies is unknown. Again, there is a clear need for suitable staff, the establishment of preservation procedures and the recognition of improved preservation requirements.

To my knowledge, no Australian body maintains sufficient staff to properly control the entire preservation process. (A study of my trip has been the illustration of a technical examination procedure at the National Library based on overseas models; it is an interim system, needing further development.)

DOCUMENTATION AND FILM RESEARCH

In addition to the collection and preservation of films, each archive maintains supporting collections of information and printed material. The existence of such collections arises out of the need to document, identify and catalogue the film collection itself, and to make possible the serious study of the cinema by drawing together all research materials in the field. As well as being research weapons, the documentation departments must also endeavour to preserve much of the material which (like the films themselves) have an intrinsic artistic and historic value beyond an original function as a means of recording filmographic information.

Among the usual components of the documentation department were:

- The library (books, periodicals, pamphlets, serials, etc.)
- The stills collection
- The press cuttings collection
- The script collection
- Other specialised collections: press sheets and other publicity items, personal materials, film music, recordings, production papers (e.g. contracts, contracts, contracts), company production records.

Such documentation resources do not exist in Australia. Existing libraries and collections are scattered, comparatively small and cannot offer the range of reference services customary

overseas. Film research in Australia therefore becomes a far more time consuming and frustrating task and it is surely no coincidence that Australian film critics lack the sound basis of research and criticism that is evident overseas. In order to provide adequate documentation, a resource of considerable collection must be built, and the arrangement and accessibility of existing collections co-ordinated with it both the range and the public availability of such material is in need of considerable expansion.

Collections of film stills in Australia are very small compared with overseas. The photographic diversity of these collections, their accessibility of access and the diversity of use seems severely hampered by their effectiveness. Requests for material from apparently rival archive departments must inevitably create confusion in the minds of potential donors, who may begin to wonder how their material will ultimately be used.

CATALOGUING

Desired cataloguing to the extent of enabling full accessibility of the collection in all types of service remains to be done by all bodies involved in film preservation. This cataloguing with brief summaries of contents are not adequate for the kind of detailed access ultimately necessary in an archive collection of film products, and other users are to gain full value from its contents.

Film cataloguing needs to be done with an eye to the possibility of linkages in a future FIM standard so that the exchange of cataloguing information between Australian and overseas archives will be facilitated.

ON-SITE STUDY

Australian facilities for on-site study are very limited. The National Library offers reasonable screening facilities but its location limits the feasibility of such study except for Canberra residents. In major population centres bodies such as the National Film Theatre of Australia and the Australian Film Institute can offer only limited opportunities for on-site study of material in their collections and their activities are not principally geared towards serving an on-going, continuing demand. In such case, moreover, emphasis must be on the projection of films; the study possibilities of viewing materials (like the Sternbergs) remain largely inaccessible to the potential student, who would be enabled to proceed at his own pace and whose needs would be less demanding of staff time.

FILM LENDING

As an undertaking quite separate from film preservation activities, many archives maintained a study collection of films in 25 mm and 16 mm which was available for loan on a rental or service-free basis to film societies (and other groups, in some cases). Some archives, working on a service-free basis, were happy to rent the activity at a low (sometimes no) fee. Others, through arrangements with a copyright holder, ran their service on a commercial rental basis, deriving from it income to support preservation activities — as at the Museum of Modern Art, New York.

In contrast, the collections were in many ways similar to the film study collection at the National Library of Australia, they represented the country's own film heritage but also included overseas feature and short films (as far as possible) such major (Hollywood) cinema and period of cinema. In European archives in particular, the make-up of the collections changed from year to year as distribution agreements with copyright holders were begun or concluded, and this was an emphasis on recently produced films.

An extensive archive collection becomes the

foundation of serious film study, and film availability, within its country, it ensures that, regardless of what damage may be inflicted on circulating prints by borrowers, or what commercial or other restrictions may be placed on the use of any film from their to use, the film continues to serve in its undisturbed form within the country.

Without such a foundation, film study collections in Australia will remain distribution libraries, and the permanent availability of any film will not be assured; print quality also will be subject to the vagaries of master material available at the time of acquisition.

Australia's single body has assumed this foundation role in supporting film study activity.

EQUIPMENT MUSEUMS

Australia had accumulated pieces of cinema machinery — vintage cameras, projectors, stage lanterns and so on — either being held in storage or being shown in display or decorative roles at various places on one archive premises. The simple display of vintage equipment for its curatorial value was maintained.

I did have opportunity to inspect other photographic equipment museums on my trip — among them the film Kodak museum in outer London — with which these inventively conceived. Such archives can great value in the museum concept, as an attractive visual means of communicating in terms of the role of a cultural body (Kodak's own has a travelling museum exhibition) and as a means of film education. Additionally they regarded it just as important to preserve the equipment — as the films — of the past and considered it (as I am inclined to) the proper function of a film archive to carry out this work.

Her Majesty's Movie Museum on the Gold Coast (Queensland) is probably the only major publicly accessible cinema equipment museum in Australia. It is a privately run organisation. Its existence highlights the absence of any similar museum funded by the government; indeed, much important cinema memorabilia has been lost or dispersed because no national body has accepted the responsibility for its preservation.

PUBLICATIONS

Most archives maintained, or were closely associated with, publishing activities, clearly seeing it as their role not only to record the progress of their national film industries through the medium of filmographic publications, but to contribute — from their particular viewpoint to the evolution, kinship and elements — to the national film culture through the medium of publications of film criticism and scholarship.

Publications sponsored by archival bodies in Australia are few in number.

The National Library publishes 'Australian Film', a periodical listing of, principally, documentary films produced in Australia, as well as programme notes and some reference materials. The National Film Theatre of Australia publishes reference materials. It was substantial films in the Australian Film Institute is planning to review publication activities which commenced some years ago with the first of a series of monographs on Australian film history.

There is a clear need for a comprehensive national filmography as well as support for the publication of relevant academic writings and works of film criticism. Such publications would not only encourage public recognition of an archive's identity but boost the library image of Australia's cinema centres.

In addition, in the Australian situation the publication of an archive newsletter on a regular basis would be an important communications medium, to inform users, potential users and the

industry of the archive's services, acquisitions and activities.

EDUCATION

It is indicative of the role attributed to an archive in many European countries that it is placed at the heart of any government-sponsored film education activity. While only one archive (Oslo) was directly involved in directing the Government's film production training program, many other archives clearly felt that they had a direct or indirect influence in this field. The archives in Stockholm and Copenhagen, for instance, maintained a close involvement with their national film schools and with university departments conducting courses in film technique and appreciation, the University of Stockholm's Film Faculty in particular, focused in the same building as the archive and the archive screenings are planned in consultation with the faculty to include films within the curriculum.

The need to create in Australian film students an awareness of their own film history is clear, and accessibility of the contents of the National Library's archive and other collections of Australian film to such students — individually or in groups, and on a frequent basis — is vital if this is to be achieved.

The principle that a national archive should collect and make available for study a substantial proportion of overseas film released in Australia needs to be established and implemented, so that current overseas production may be made accessible for continuing student use. An archive is, indeed, the only body which could maintain such a collection in a manner acceptable to the film industry.

PUBLIC SCREENINGS

Archives want not content simply to encourage on-site viewing of the material in their collection; individual viewings are essential for specific individual study purposes, and this type of usage of archive films would account for the majority of viewings that a film would receive. However, since films are basically intended to be seen in a theatrical setting by groups rather than individuals, most archives consider it an essential part of their activity to organize public screenings of films in their collection. Not are they simply content to screen them publicly, but also endeavour to re-create the atmosphere of the original presentation, and to present the film in its original form (a technical impossibility in many commercial cinemas today), and with printed attendance and/or verbal screenings.

Screenings of an archival nature are limited in Australia. The body most active in this area is the National Film Theatre of Australia, a private body which has assumed the archival role of imparting thematic reasons from overseas archives. It screens in venues in each capital city which, while sometimes adequate for good presentation of modern films in accordance with commercial standards, cannot provide the range of technical resources and audience facilities available in some overseas archives. The NFTA can be said to have established the validity of archival screenings in Australia on a wide basis, although its programming is less balanced than would be the case overseas: there is an emphasis on American cinema, while Australian cinema receives a very limited exposure.

It is clear that the activities of the NFTA should be co-ordinated with a national archive able to offer improved screening facilities and assist in the procurement of prints — either from its own collection or from overseas — in broader range and quality of archival screenings in Australia. Similarly, useful co-ordination should be achieved with the Australian Film Institute in the development of its chain of centres for specialist screenings of Australian film.

Top: National Film Archive, London. Inset: Archive holdings off in the Archive/Gilbert studio. The archive acquired its first 16mm film prior to 1945 and has since then built up its collection of film and video material in a series of stages.

Middle: David Williamson, 1980. The library holdings of film and video are in the Archive/Gilbert studio, the Archive's archive storage with film and video holdings in the Archive/Gilbert studio.

Bottom: David Williamson, 1980. In the Archive/Gilbert studio, the Archive/Gilbert studio is a building which the Archive/Gilbert studio has been used for the presentation of film and video holdings, as well as the film and video holdings. The archive storage is in the Archive/Gilbert studio.



INTERNATIONAL LIAISON

Presently, the exchange system provides a visible international network for the recovery of lost films and their return to their country of origin.

The fragmentation of archival activities in Australia has produced considerable confusion among overseas archivists as to how the various organisations are connected and what each of them is doing (the Australian Film Institute, the National Film Theatre of Australia and the National Library of Australia were often confused) and sometimes thought of as a single body, for instance). It is possibly because this confusion also exists in Australia that overseas archivists receive research enquiries that ought to have come to an Australian archivist, if the writer had known who to approach. There was an obvious need for an identifiable Australian body to fill this role.

Because of Australia's geographic isolation from archive activity overseas, the need for staff interchange is perhaps more vital than would be the case for, say, European archivists. In order to build an expertise and facilitate co-operative projects, the establishment of foreign, and continuing contact by Australian archivists with their counterparts overseas is essential if Australia is to have a respected and individual film image abroad.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The archive concept is strongly established in most countries with a film culture of any significance, having developed as the most appropriate answer to a clear need. It has attained a validity in the eyes of the film industry, government and cultural authorities, and archive operates at the most level in institutions like national art galleries and museums.
2. Archives operate with a high degree of independence and self-determination which they regard as fundamental to their role as impartial, objective and non-political guardians of their nation's film culture. A characteristic autonomy remains effective regardless of the archive's attachment to, or independence of, a parent body.
3. There is a distinctive and specialised professionalism that is characteristic of archive staff, and is essential to the competent operation of an archive. It is attuned to the particular nature, standards and demands of archive work and is unique to it.
4. Preservation and usage are the two sides of the archive coin; the latter provides the former, and archive actively effect a wage range of services to the film industry and the public. At the same time, careful judgement ensures that preservation objectives are not compromised to meet immediate stage pressures.
5. The laws of chemistry dictate that there are no short-cuts to film preservation. An archive that is content as its duty to preserve the film heritage recognises the realities and implements as resources to meet the long term challenge of preservation with the most possible compromise — investing in storage facilities, handling and viewing equipment and support staff — knowing that it must have a growing role in setting standards that will be recognised throughout the film industry.
6. Archives provide a wide range of services and facilities — screenings to specially designed screens, information, documentation resources, publications, film screenings — in

order to give substance to their unique capability of rendering the world's film heritage most readily accessible in the most sympathetic environment.

7. Geographically, archives are usually located close to the centre of their national film industry and within the major population centre of their country. The archive thereby maintains the connectivity of its resources and its opportunity for close personal contact with the film industry, its major source of acquisitions.
8. Archives are concerned not only with the primary responsibility of preserving their national film production but with making available for research the totality of world cinema through the medium of significant films, documentation and literature. To build such a comprehensive resource was the dominant objective of all national archives and the basic motivation in the development of archive selection/acquisition activities.
9. FIAPF archives used their films with complete integrity; they did not knowingly contravene agreements made at the time of acquisition. The regulations they have thereby observed over the years are still a part from other film repositories which may be less precise in these matters. Acquisition of a film does not, therefore, automatically imply any future usage of it by the archive (e.g. for a public screening); archives recognised that the copyright owner retained complete control over his film.
10. Inter-archive activity — staff exchanges, co-operative activities, film and documentation exchanges, the researching of common problems — are given a high priority at individual archives. As a means of maintaining growth and awareness, it was clear that any archive rejecting such contact would quickly lose touch (and eventually credibility) in the international archive scene.
11. Archives frequently assumed a central role in their nation's film study and film education activities, encouraging and utilising the work of film societies, film courses in schools and universities, organising discussions and seminars and so on.
12. The provision of large and comprehensive documentation and information resources is emphasised as heavily as the preservation of films that are aspects of the same job. The archive operates as a functional national centre for the provision of film information of all kinds, both national and foreign.
13. By virtue of their unique national responsibilities, archives develop a symbolic significance as the repository and custodian of their nation's film culture and contribute in a vital and meaningful way to its continuing development.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. It is doubtful whether much is likely to be achieved in a co-ordinated and efficient manner unless individual archive bodies in Australia combine in some permanent form. Including for the moment the Australian Broadcasting Commission, Film Australia and the Australian War Memorial — General Asset agencies with well-defined and circumscribed areas of archival operation — as effective synergism or interlocking of activities seems not only desirable but also feasible even if many of these bodies derive their finance from Government sources. It is therefore any firm and considered belief that to achieve a purposeful and effective

ration/organisation of archival functions in Australia a national organisation must be specifically charged with the official responsibility for (a) carrying out as wide a range of national archive functions as possible, and (b) co-ordinating those which it does not carry out itself.

In determining the role and functions of such a body, consideration needs to be given to the established validity of the archive concept overseas, and its relevance to the Australian situation. Again, if a firm and considered belief that the archive concept, as described in this report, is both valid and relevant in the present Australian situation. The key to establishing such a national archive authority lies in the development of the National Library's film archive operation, because (a) it is the largest collection representing Australia's film history and (b) as such, over the years, has operated in much as a successor of FIAPF standards and ethos; the organisation of the Collection and the services it provides reflect this recognition.

Although much has been achieved while the film archive has been administratively linked with the National Library, I believe the practical advantages and educational opportunities enjoyed by an autonomous body are more clearly in the national interest. Accordingly I would recommend:

- (a) that an autonomous and clearly identifiable national archival body be established to both perform and co-ordinate national film archive functions, comparable with the range of functions of FIAPF archives overseas.
- (b) that such an archive body be funded on the exclusive archival operating of the National Library.
- (c) that the new body be set up as an independent statutory authority, or be administratively attached — as a self-determining entity — to an existing film authority (such as Department of Media or the Film Commission). In the light of extensive experience, and the history of practical development in Australia, this appears to me to be a logical progression from the present organisation of activities.
2. The geographical location of a national archive is vital to its potential effectiveness and efficiency; once this is agreed, with permanent storage and other facilities it cannot be easily moved. Three locations suggest themselves: Sydney, Melbourne and Canberra (where the National Library archive is presently located). While Canberra has a symbolic significance as the appropriate location for a national body, there are strong practical reasons for locating it elsewhere. Within one of the nation's two film capitals (which are also the nation's major population centres) — namely Sydney, no doubt, to those which dominated the establishment of many Australian Government film authorities in Sydney rather than in Canberra. It seems to me that Sydney is the most appropriate location for a national archive. If, in many ways, the archive centre for the Australian film industry and offers the most fruitful and efficient source for both acquisition and staff recruitment I would therefore recommend that the National Library's archive operation be moved to a suitable central location in Sydney. This will have the additional effect of separating the archive from the Library's information film lending service — a separate operation with a quite different look and character — with which it is often confused by users and the general public.
3. Overseas archives have built their specialised staffs with considerable care over long



Left: Archives

Left: Public Institute, Sydney. Facilities for viewing films in a comfortable room in a rooming house, in Sydney, are a necessary provision of early access to archival holdings.

periods. A similar concentrated amount of professional and experienced people is vital if archive work in Australia is to reach the same level of effectiveness.

Therefore, I recommend:

- (a) that a career structure be established in the national archive sufficient to attract and hold and develop qualified staff.
 - (b) that position classification standards be sufficiently flexible to allow the recruitment of people with appropriate backgrounds in varying aspects of film.
 - (c) that a system of inter-archivist staff exchanges be established in conjunction with overseas archivists, to serve as a medium of staff training, and to establish both personal contacts and the bona fides of the archive.
4. The lack of archival storage facilities for any type of film in Australia is a major deficiency which needs to be remedied with urgency. Accordingly I recommend:
- (a) that the design and construction of large-scale and permanent storage facilities for archival and current film be commenced immediately.
 - (b) that provision be made for the researching and development of storage facilities for color-dye film over the next five years.
5. Since facilities for archival film acquisition and printing in Australia are very limited, and in most cases not directly under the control of any archival body, it is recommended:
- (a) suitable work-room and film examination facilities be established, on the site of the storage complex.
 - (b) specialized film printing equipment and restoration equipment be progressively acquired and housed in the work-room building.
6. In order to provide a functional and comprehensive film information resource in Australia, and to maximize the usefulness of existing scattered collections of film documentation, it is recommended:
- (a) that within the national archive located in Sydney there be established a documentation collection organized as FIAT bases and fully and freely accessible to users throughout Australia as an information resource.
 - (b) that such a collection should include all types of film literature and printed and manuscript material related to film.
 - (c) that a systematic and comprehensive programme be launched to search for, gather and incorporate into this collection, production papers and publicity material relating to all facets of Australian film and television material, past and present.
 - (d) that the staff of this collection should coordinate the existing disparate documentation collections throughout Australia.
7. To render the archive's collections of films and documentation accessible to the public, and to encourage their use, it is recommended:
- (a) that film viewing equipment (e.g. Stenobank) be installed in a suitable environment in the national archive as well as a facility for television presentation, that reading room and documentation inspection facilities be established, with appropriate reference staff, cataloguing and information.
 - (c) that in the national archive building there be established a cinema with appropriately advanced equipment to permit the screening of any type of film.
 - (d) that the national archive itself present on its own cinema theatre screens of public screenings, using material from its own collection and from overseas archives.
 - (e) that the archive establish a topical collection of films for loan for use in film study courses and by film societies.
 - (f) that the archive institute a continuing public relations programme, including the publication of an archive newsletter, to encourage public awareness of its resources and services.
8. The geographical spread of Australian population centres inevitably renders the possession of a truly national archive service difficult, since the archive's collection and staff must be concentrated in one locality. To overcome this handicap, it is recommended:
- that regional archive centres be established in state capitals and other major centres, perhaps co-ordinated with State Film Centres or other appropriate film bodies, to provide as many of the services of the national body as possible, with viewing prints of films and records or microfilm documentation being sent on request to the regional centres. Such centres would need to satisfy the security and copyright requirements consistent with FIAT standards.
9. In order to overcome difficulties caused by fragmentation and diversity of standards and acquisition policies of existing archive film collections, it is recommended:
- (a) that with the exception of highly specialized bodies such as the Australian War Memorial, existing collections be consolidated to ensure uniform preservation standards and uniform accessibility.
 - (b) that urgent steps be taken to implement a comprehensive programme to fill in the gaps in existing collections of Australian material, that is, to incorporate a wide range of current productions into the collection and to conduct organized searches for missing early works.
 - (c) that also as a high priority a national selective policy covering all areas of Australian film and television production be formulated and implemented, and

supplemented by specialized selection committees be developed.

- (d) that again as a high priority a national archive collection of overseas films comparable to similar holdings of FIAT archives overseas and relevant to film researchers be established and maintained as a continuously growing resource, again developing the services and advice of a specialized committee.
10. To ensure that important material may be acquired for preservation, and to help establish the archive's role, it is recommended:
- (a) that legislation be introduced by the Australian parliament to require the deposit of a copy of every film produced in Australia in the national archive, at the archivist's expense and if selected by it for preservation.
- (b) that such legislation also require distributors of overseas films to deposit a good print of each film brought by them at completion of release, if selected by the archive.

It is emphasized that such deposit would in no way affect the copyright owner's control of his films, and the archive would be liable to ensure that copyright conditions were scrupulously observed.

11. Research into Australian film history, the identification and discussion of the elements which make up our national film culture and will contribute to its development, is vital not only for socio-historical reasons but for the effect which it will have on the future growth of the Australian film industry. As the viable embodiment of a national film heritage it is an archivist's role, I believe, to encourage such research in every possible way. Therefore it is recommended:

- (a) that the national archive be empowered to provide grants of fellowships for such research.
- (b) that it also be empowered to subsidize film production which makes substantial use of archive footage and encourage a wide appreciation and awareness of the Australian film identity.
- (c) that it develop a corresponding publishing programme, emphasizing co-operation, publication or reference works dealing with Australian film production and eventually extending to a comprehensive national bibliography.

The collection of cinema equipment is an appropriate incentive for a national film archive and should be as adjunct to other archive activities in Australia. Accordingly, it is recommended that:

- a cinema equipment museum be developed on the premises of the national archive.

These recommendations propose a considerable advance and reorganization of the present pattern and scale of film archive activities in Australia. It is my belief that an advance of this magnitude is necessary, if Australia is to properly preserve its surviving film heritage and to make up the considerable losses which crass the aspect of its international film image and activity in contrast to sharply with the accepted state of affairs in comparable countries overseas. If the importance of a national film archive is considered against other cultural priorities the recommended development is largely a self-evident process in a cultural objective of considerable validity.

A national film archive, if it fulfils the role I have attempted to outline, will, I believe, have a national and (sometimes) international importance which is difficult to visualize at present. It will become — as is the case in other countries — a focus for the country's film identity, presenting it to the world in a way that is not possible through any other type of institution. In a country which has such a long film history — and such an enormous and undervalued film potential — its significance could be great indeed. ■

35 mm PRODUCTION SURVEY

35 MM IN PRODUCTION

A SALUTE TO THE GREAT McCARTHY

Director/Producer David Baker
 David Baker
 (from the original novel by Tompkins)
 Executive Producer Richard Brennan
 Associate Producer Richard Brennan
 Assistant Director Joe McKinley
 Wardrobe Agnieszka Kordka
 Makeup David Gough
 Stills Lyn Milsome
 Continuity Lyn Milsome
 Photography Bruce MacGregor
 Camera Operator Peter James
 Editor John Smith
 Sound Recorder Ben Green
 Unit Manager Mike Morrison

Cast: John Jarrett (McCarthy), Sandra McInnes, Judy Martin, Kate Macdonald, Denis Miller, Chris Hovell, Colin Davis, Perry Hargreaves, Colin Cull, Peter Anderson, Bruce Spence, Jack Oyle, Mike Gillies, Peter Cumming

The career of a brilliant Australian Rules footballer — from his country recruitment to his first league game, based on the Barry Crispin novel
 Budget: \$500,000
 Final Editing Stage

THE FIRST ANIMATED STEP

Director Yoram Gross
 Production Company Yoram Gross
 Yoram Gross Film Studio
 Script Yoram Gross
 Screenplay Yoram Gross
 Artists Joel Jarvis
 Yoram Gross
 Tricia Genter

Animated film in seven sequences, (1) comic history of animated film, (2) achievement of film, (3) famous characters, (4) dissemination of animation techniques, (5) international market place, (6) the development of animation and (7) the finished product.

Budget: \$23,000
 Length: 30 minutes
 Filming stage

THE MAN FROM HONG KONG (Working Title)

Director Brian Trueman-Smith
 Brian Trueman-Smith
 Production Company The Movie Company
 Executive Producers Patrick Chung
 John Hume
 Producers Kenneth Chow
 David Manning
 Production Manager Andy Morgan
 Production Co-ordinator David Harbridge
 Assistant Director Ron Oliver
 Script Brian Trueman-Smith
 Director of Photography Russell Boyd
 Camera Operator Chrisman
 Editor Alan Leung
 Second Assistant David Gough
 Music Neil Duff
 Sound Recorder Peter Anderson
 Stills Peter Anderson
 Makeup Peter Anderson

A SPORTING PROPOSITION

Director Gail Chaffey
 Executive Producer Gail Chaffey
 Production Company Wall Disney Productions
 Executive Producer AFA Leisuretime
 Producer Jerome Courland
 Production Manager Peter Appleton
 Assistant Director Mark Gorton
 Script Nicholas Allan Simon
 Director of Photography Jack Gault
 Editor John Boudreau
 Colour Process Eastman
 Editor Mike Gorton
 Art Director Bob Hutton
 Sound Effects Wendy Morris
 Sound Recorder John Heath
 Stills Morris Davis
 Cast: Sue Giffen, Robert Barlow, John McLean, Michael Craig

A Sporting Proposition is set in the Australian film in the late 1920's and is an adventure story about a boy and his twin sister. Based on James A. Michener's book.
 Budget: \$1,000,000 plus. Shooting: October/November in NSW

THE REMOVALISTS

Director Tom Jeffrey
 Producer Margaret Park
 Script David Williamson
 Associate Producer Richard Brennan
 Production Manager Sue Milson
 Assistant Director Mike Latta
 Lighting Graham Lind
 Camera Operator Peter James
 Sound Recorder Ian Macdonald
 Editor Tony Teague

Script Graeme Marshall
 Producer Graeme Marshall
 Wardrobe Sue Williams
 Makeup Lisa Milne
 Stills Sue Williams
 Continuity Sue Williams
 Photography John Hargreaves
 Camera Operator John Hargreaves
 Director of Photography John Hargreaves
 Editor John Hargreaves
 Sound Recorder John Hargreaves
 Unit Manager John Hargreaves

SUNDAY TOO FAR AWAY

Director Rex Hansen
 Production Company Rex Hansen
 Rex Hansen
 Producer Rex Hansen
 Assistant Producer Rex Hansen
 Director of Photography Rex Hansen
 Camera Operator Rex Hansen
 Editor Rex Hansen
 Sound Recorder Rex Hansen
 Unit Manager Rex Hansen

THE TRUE STORY OF ESKIMO NELL

Director Richard Franklin
 Producer Richard Franklin
 Executive Producer Richard Franklin
 Producer Richard Franklin
 Director of Photography Richard Franklin
 Camera Operator Richard Franklin
 Editor Richard Franklin
 Sound Recorder Richard Franklin
 Unit Manager Richard Franklin
 Cast: John Jarrett, Sandra McInnes, Judy Martin, Kate Macdonald, Denis Miller, Chris Hovell, Colin Davis, Perry Hargreaves, Colin Cull, Peter Anderson, Bruce Spence, Jack Oyle, Mike Gillies, Peter Cumming

PLUGS

Director Terry Bourke
 Production Company Terry Bourke
 Executive Producer Terry Bourke
 Producer Terry Bourke

Associate Producers Terry Bourke
 Producer Terry Bourke
 Executive Producer Terry Bourke
 Producer Terry Bourke
 Director of Photography Terry Bourke
 Camera Operator Terry Bourke
 Editor Terry Bourke
 Sound Recorder Terry Bourke
 Unit Manager Terry Bourke

BACK STREET GENERAL

Director Alan Davies
 Producer Alan Davies
 Executive Producer Alan Davies
 Producer Alan Davies
 Director of Photography Alan Davies
 Camera Operator Alan Davies
 Editor Alan Davies
 Sound Recorder Alan Davies
 Unit Manager Alan Davies

35 MM PREPRODUCTION

CADDOE

Director Dan Cranley
 Producer Dan Cranley
 Executive Producer Dan Cranley
 Producer Dan Cranley
 Director of Photography Dan Cranley
 Camera Operator Dan Cranley
 Editor Dan Cranley
 Sound Recorder Dan Cranley
 Unit Manager Dan Cranley

CHILLA AND BERT

Director Ross Whyte
 Production Company Ross Whyte
 Producer Ross Whyte
 Executive Producer Ross Whyte
 Producer Ross Whyte
 Director of Photography Ross Whyte
 Camera Operator Ross Whyte
 Editor Ross Whyte
 Sound Recorder Ross Whyte
 Unit Manager Ross Whyte

CUBIC

Director David Gorman
 Production Company David Gorman
 Producer David Gorman
 Executive Producer David Gorman
 Producer David Gorman
 Director of Photography David Gorman
 Camera Operator David Gorman
 Editor David Gorman
 Sound Recorder David Gorman
 Unit Manager David Gorman

16 mm PRODUCTION SURVEY

16 MM

AMARDO

Writer/Director/Producer: **Stephen Peters**
Production Company: **Redstone Distributors (Sydney)**

First Unit: **Stephen Peters**
Second Unit: **John Rebus**

Photography: **Edward Hall**
Music: **Kerry Pickner**
Script: **Sheryl MacConrad**
Colour Process: **Extrachrome**

A short documentary on **Amaro Park** featuring and all the various motor sports that take place.
Shooting: **August/November**

A POINT OF DEPARTURE

Director: **Dee McLennan**
Production Manager: **Chris Ingram**
Script: **Sue McLennan**
Photography: **Peter MacLennan**
Music: **By Request**
Sound Recorder: **Lloyd Gerrard**
Boom Operator: **Chris Goldsmith**
Assistant Cameramen: **Philip Green**
30 minutes, 16 mm
Budget: \$2,100
Release: **gnd**

CHILDREN OF THE MOON

Producer/Director: **Bob West**
Assistant Director: **Wayne Smith**
Lighting Cameramen: **Bob Kaler**
Sound: **Lloyd Gerrard**

Cast: **John Dugan and Alan Henry**
Short before. A young man returning from city life meets a village and undergoes substantial emotional and spiritual change.

THE FIRM MAN

Writer/Producer: **John Dugan**
Director: **Keith Teague**
Production: **Tony Jackson**
Associate Producer: **Martin Bartlett**
Sound Recorder: **Lloyd Gerrard**
Sound Assistant: **Wayne Smith**
Camera: **Alan Henry**
Editor: **Tony Jackson**

Cast: **John Cammish, Brian Chapman, Peter Carrington, Chris McGuire, Max Gillies, Bruce Sykes**

A multi-award businessman joins a mysterious super business organisation known as 'The Firm'. The film is in fact a political organisation expending certain attempts in its members.
Length: 100 minutes.
Awaiting release.

HIGH AS A KITE (Working Title)

Director: **Ken Fowley**
Distributor: **Max Douch**
Production Company: **Max Douch Productions**
Producer: **Ken Fowley**
Photography: **William Self**
Colour Process: **Extrachrome**
Sound Recorder: **Max Head**

Cast: **Rob Mayes, Stephen Myles**
Documentary on two kite fliers.
Budget: \$25,000
Length: 30 minutes
In production.

HOW WILLILY YOU SING

A film by **Garry Patterson**
Production Assistant: **Jim Robertson**
Story: **Conrad**

Photography: **Peter Carrington**
Music: **Wayne Smith**
Vibes: **Alan Henry**
Muppets: **Robert Ferguson**
Performed by: **Donna Givens**
Written and performed by **Garry Patterson**
Music Director: **Jim Robertson**
Casting: **Morris Goodman**
Screenplay: **Alan Henry**
Cast: **Alan Henry, Peter Carrington, Jeff Turnbull, with Peter Henderson, Jim Allen, Peter Henderson, Pat Weller, Steven Williams, Mandy and Andy Mundy**

It is a long semi-autobiographical comedy of sorts, more like a political, satirical, comic-style novel. It's a production-line film. It is not a commercial product. **Garry Patterson**
Budget: \$14,000
Final editing stages.

KELLY

Director: **Rad Nichols**
Distributor: **Wesley Library**
Production: **Adel Plus Unit**
Company: **Dina Mellor**
Associate Producer: **Adel Plus Unit**
Producer: **Adel Plus Unit**
Manager: **Adel Plus Unit**
Assistant Director: **Adel Plus Unit**
Casting: **Adel Plus Unit**
Photography: **Adel Plus Unit**
Editor: **Adel Plus Unit**
Production Designer: **Adel Plus Unit**
Assistant: **Adel Plus Unit**
Special Effects: **Adel Plus Unit**
Music Editor: **Adel Plus Unit**
Sound Recorder: **Adel Plus Unit**
Sound Re-recorder: **Adel Plus Unit**
Technical Advisor: **Adel Plus Unit**
Script Co-ordinator: **Adel Plus Unit**

Cast: **Ray Lindenberg, Robert Kinski, Geoffrey Fullen, Bruce Row**
A political thriller set in 1979. Six months after the USA has gone to war, American naval Kelly Bryant comes to Australia, the press and police coverage on his grating again the life of a star.

22 minutes
Budget: \$2,500
In release.

MAY FLY

Director: **Keith Anderson**
Production: **Keith Anderson**
Assistant: **Keith Anderson**
Photography: **Keith Anderson**
Company: **Keith Anderson**
Sound Recorder: **Keith Anderson**

Cast: **Walter Opatowski, John Patterson, Michael Sadler**
Twenty-four hours in the life of a crime writer during which he contemplates the characters in his latest novel.
Editing stages.

NUGIE CULTURE SHOCK

Director: **John Gahr**
Producer: **John Gahr**
Production Manager: **John Gahr**
Script: **John Gahr**
Casting: **John Gahr**
Colour Process: **Extrachrome**
Sound Recorder: **John Gahr**
Sound Re-recorder: **John Gahr**

A hard hitting documentary on the effects of the European invasion of Nuge's social systems and culture.
Length: 48 minutes
Budget: \$20,000
In release.

QUICK, FOLLOW THAT STAR

Director: **Kit Symphons**
Producer: **Kit Symphons**
Script: **Kit Symphons**
Photography: **Kit Symphons**
Editors: **Kit Symphons**
Colour Process: **Extrachrome**
Music: **Kit Symphons**
Sound Recorder: **Kit Symphons**
Assistant: **Kit Symphons**

Animated film about the state of the world (in particular pollution and religion) as seen through the eyes of the (imaginary) journey by an animated (sawmill).
Budget: \$1,000
Length: 20 minutes
Shooting: **October/November**

RELUCTANT FLAME

Director: **John Gahr**
Photography: **John Gahr**
Production Manager: **John Gahr**
Script: **John Gahr**
Colour Process: **Extrachrome**
Sound: **John Gahr**
Sound Re-recorder: **John Gahr**

Documentary on three naked Nugini women based in village position and aimed at everything the cinema in political and social life.
Budget: \$2,000
Length: 15 minutes
Release: **print stage**

ROBINSON

Director: **Peter Tannock**
Photography: **Peter Tannock**
Script: **Peter Tannock**
Sound Recorder: **Peter Tannock**

Documentary on 70-year-old **Reg Robinson** who has built 16 mm camera systems and projects for the last 15 years. Among other achievements he directed a film in 1952 titled *The Shipping Division* and recently has built a super 16 mm camera with **Vincent Moran**.
Editing stages.



ROLLING HOME

Directors Paul Wring, David Louie
Production Company Island Films
Producer Paul Wring
Script Judy Bray, Paul Wring
Story Greg McCrory
Concept by Greg McCrory
Photography Michael Simmons
Colour Process Archetype
Editor David Louie
Music David Stewart
Musical Director John Bushelle
Musicians Bob Wolf, Allen and Turley Miller
Sound Mixed by Les McKenna and Don Olsen (SAPA)
Editing by Peter Ablett

Cast John and Rene Ablett, Judy Bray, Laurie Lyons, Robina Newman, Mandy Parker, Michael Simmons, Ian Watson, Paul and Madeline Wring.

A surf movie in which wandering only contributes to our search of the perfect wave. "There were ten of us that year who left the city far behind and headed west, we had heard stories of a perfect wave, of huge mountains, of perfect sun on hidden beaches. Our journey was a quest into the beyond, a search for new people, new places and new experiences." (Paul Wring and Judy Bray)

Length 85 minutes
Budget \$70-800
Release print stage.

SOLO FLIGHT

Director Ian Mills
Production Manager Pat Robinson
Photography Gordon Shaw
Script Ian Mills
Sound Recorder Lloyd Carnie
Editor Kevin Scott
Cast Rene Russell, Don Barker, John Lay

The longing of a woman to escape the rigour to pursue of her everyday world and the isolation placed on her because of her human society and human relations.
Length 85 minutes
Release stage.

SUMMER SHAADOWS

Director Scott Murray
Production Company Anne Plans
Producer Simon Scott
Script Scott Murray
Sound Simon Scott
Photography Gordon Shaw
Editor Zylke Le Clair
Sound Recorder Lloyd Carnie
Sound Re-recorder Bob Gardner
Story Study of a young man's persistence in a one-way love relationship and his subsequent realisation of the existence of choice.
Budget \$10,000
Length 30 minutes.
Production

WE'RE ALRIGHT APART FROM THE WOMAN ON THE 2.30 FROM SYDNEY

Written, produced, directed and edited by Andrew Pankostkowski.

From a short story in *Stock and Land*.

17 min.
 in production

In view of the rapid growth of Australian production the co-ordinates of the cinema would be greatly assisted by individual producers and directors sending their production details to:

"In Production",
 Cinema Papers,
 37 Richmond Street,
 Richmond, Victoria 3121

Left Rene Ablett from Paul Wring and David Louie's *Rolling Home*.

Centre Left: James Robertson in Kevin Anderson's *May 7th*.

Centre Right Rene Russell and Don Barker as husband and wife in Ian Mills' *Solo Flight*.

Right Production still from Andrew Pankostkowski's *We're Alright Apart from the Woman on the 2.30 from Sydney*.

Below Trobriand Island village from John Ostry and Ian Stocks' *Reluctant Flame*.





25 Sirius Road,
Lane Cove, 2086, NSW Australia
Telephone: 428 5300
Telex: 21585

SAMUELSON FILM LIGHTING

We now have pleasure in offering the Australian Film Industry the most comprehensive range of lighting equipment including 1,000 amp. — 250 amp. silent generators on go anywhere 4-wheel drive vehicles.

Lightweight Brute Arcs, lanaro, Mole and Lowell lightweight equipment plus all the other "goodies" the Australian electrician needs.

Contact: Gaffer — Alan Martin
Generators — John Cummings.

Samuelson Film Service Australia Pty Ltd would like to extend to all their many friends in the Australian Film and Television industry their best wishes for Christmas and 1975.



PRODUCTION REPORT

A Salute to the Great McCarthy



Henry Brandon as Colonel R. Miller



Doug Elliott as the Vice-President of the South Melbourne Football Club and Rex Brown as its coach.



The football experts: Jack Doolan (Jack Dyer) and Eric Amos (Eric Richards)



McCarthy, second from left, leading every inch a defender



McCarthy (John Jones) under the shower with girlfriend Miss Ronald (Gaye Marling).



Associate Producer Richard Spence holds the football while Director of Photography Bruce McNaughton prepares to shoot some park or skate

A Salute to the Great McCarthy

Along with *An American Horror Story* and *The Big Man Fly*, Oakley's *A Salute to the Great McCarthy* is probably the best known fictional work on Australian Rules Football. Since its publication in 1968 the novel has averaged yearly sales of approximately 15,000. David Baker bought the novel's rights outright, and began scripting with young A.P.G. writer John Rensard, assisted by script development money from the Film and Television Board. Baker then applied to the Australian Film Development Corporation to produce McCarthy on a budget of \$250,000, and was offered an investment of approximately \$100,000. The remaining \$150,000 was raised privately. Asked whether all the money was together before the credit squeeze, Baker replied "Yes, but had I planned on a starting date some three and a half months later, I might have been in a quite different position. God knows it's hard enough at the best of times to get hold of the dough, but wanting it now would really not be the best."

Crew

Senior Producer	David Hines
Producer/Comptroller	Robert C. Finkel
Associate Producer	Edward Symon
	Alan Symon
Unit Manager	Michael MacDonnell
Producer/Secretary	Janet Woolf
Producer	
Director	Johnston Tynes
Director of Photography	Eric McEneaney
Casting Director	Patricia Johnson
	Gary Tolman
Second Unit	
Director of Photography	John Rydell
Unit Photography	Robert Johnson
First Assistant	
Director	Pat Melton
Second Assistant	
Director	Ernest Selznick
Art Director	David Canino
Food Buyer	Patricia Nelson
Clothing/Linens	Robert Hurlbut
Costume Designer	John Gaudy
Editor	John Nee
Assistant Editor	Patricia Wiseman
Dubbing Editor	James Reynolds
Music	Robert Schrammer
Music Buyer	Mike Grier
Assistant Electronic	Paul Grier
Music	Ned Martin
Assistant Grip	Michael Fugate
Stability Person	Monica Papp
Pageant Representative	John Chelakian
Production Office	Alicia K. Kline
Production Office	Lois Kline

David R. Anderson
Boris G. Gelfand
Felix A. Grigorenko
C. James

Barry Green
David Cooper
Natalie Miller
Adam Baker

Cast

Adin Jovan
Sandra McGowan
July 1980s
Katie Humpstead
Kerrie Miller
Chris Heywood
Celine Druin
Barry Humphries
Coke Craft
John Forsey
Tim Farley
Brett Spence
Scott Paine
Ray Stevenson
Yvonne Gray
Peter Cameron
Lara Kaurish
Tim Robinson
Jack Doo
Max Pinedell
Joy Day
Sally Coakley
Jenny Borden
David Adams
Aurora Hull
Max Collins
Bill Russell
John Pendergast
Tina Bond
Tony Lutz
Lynette Mack

McCurdy
Navy
Miss Russell
Anchorage
MacDermott
Washington
Aukerman
Colonel B. Miller
Trenton
Whitaker
Mortimer
Bill Dwyer
Burt Johnson
September
Mrs. Thompson
Rusk
J. Arnold
Herb
J. Dillard
Thompson
J. H. Redfern
Nurse Cook
Linn
Office Boy
Ole Ege
SMA/BOM
Mr. Kesselhof
Wagner
Linn
Miss Russell
Harris

McCarthy
Nancy
Ann Marshall
Annette
Max Chambers
Williamson
Halkinman
J. B. Miller
Tremor
Winkler
Miss Lee
Bill O'Connell
Johnston
Seymour
Thompson

Ruth
L. Arnold
Mark
J. DiGiovanni
Thomas
H. Redford
Norman Chase
Lee
O'Brien
One Day
Stacy Brown
Kurtzfeld
Wagner
Lane
Susan Spaulding
Hansen



McCauley (John Jacob) and Mike Russell (Andy Moran) take in the



Has Ilsema Broken and Has OHS Collapsed after the Invasion of Mexico?



Kevin M. Mahoney, John Scott David Baker, Gregory A. Jones

DAVID BAKER

Director/Producer

David Baker began his film career at Merton Park Studios in England, working on a number of features and the television series *Scotland Yard*. Baker subsequently worked in various capacities ranging from assistant cameraman to director with Pathe, Disney and MGM, including positions on Mely Dick and Jack Clayton's *The Bespoke Overcoat*. In 1955 Baker joined Granada Television, but returned to Australia two years later for HSV-7's *Young Seven* and Pacific Film's *The Terrible Ten*. He rejoined Granada in 1961 where he produced the current affairs programme *People and Places* for 15 months.

1964 saw Baker back in Australia directing *The Magic Boomerang* and *Seaspray*. He then went on to direct 22 episodes of *Animal Doctor* for Fremantle International, N.E.T. and Ajax

Film, before directing the Paramount and Pacific Film's *Spyglass*. Baker's involvement with feature films (in a directorial capacity) came with the 1972 Australian production *Likids*, in which he directed the final episode *The Family Man*. Last year he shot the Film and Television Board financed *Squeaker's Mate*, which at present remains incomplete with Baker considering an option to make a longer film of it.

A *Salute to the Great McCarthy* is David Baker's first full length feature and at the time of interview — conducted by Gordon Glenn and Scott Murray — was nearing fine-cut. Baker begins by discussing the difficulties he encountered with the football world during the shooting of *The Great McCarthy*.

DAVID BAKER: The film just seems light years away from any of the football world's immediate concerns, even though it is essentially about a footballer. From a film point of view it wouldn't have seemed as remote.

They didn't see it as good publicity?

I don't think they saw it as publicity or anything of that sort. These athletes appear exclusively directed to winning matches. The only PR they place any importance on is the PR that comes from winning matches, and had I been able to prove that making a film would win them matches I suppose that it would have been quite different, but I wasn't able, nor would I be able to. Eventually of course I went with South Melbourne but that was only after I had been turned down a lot of other times. It actually took me a year to get into a club.

Do you think the film will get the same review from football followers as from the football administration?

Probably, I don't think football followers are really impressed by films about football, but McCarthy isn't about football.

Would you care to say what it is about?

It is about a chap who happens to be a footballer. I mean, if I made a film about you, would you expect it to be described as a film about journalism?

Oh, it could be. As for "McCarthy" it depends on how much football there is in it.

I think it plays a fairly minor part.

So you came to the book "Salute to the Great McCarthy" not from wanting to make a film about something like football, which you thought would have box office appeal, but because you had read the book and wanted to make a film about that particular character?

Oh, yes. I knew I wanted to make a comedy and I knew it had to have elements which an audience would identify with. It could have

been a bi-filmic play. I suppose I say that rather timidly because playing football isn't quite as exciting as playing football, but I think it is to do with body contact. I think the football background is more exciting, more dynamic, and just more visually interesting.

It seems like the treatment of football in the film is quite different to the way Hollywood always used to make these sort of films. They always had the home-town guy coming up through the end, winning the girl as well as the match.

Yes, well I was always conscious of the lesson learned from these films. Of McCarthy's 110 minutes, actual football might account for about seven of those minutes, whereas at those older-style Hollywood pictures the sport would take up 50 or 60 per cent. Audiences don't go to see film-fut sport, they go to see films about sportmen which include the playing of sport.

However the story in these old ones is usually on such a simple level that the match analysts who're happy in the character. Therefore the home-run means that he has won not only the match but everything else as well — including the girl.

Yes, he may have been vain and conceited and because he goes out and plays roughly in scoring his goals the girl seems him down.

Some reports of the shooting seem to indicate there are almost natural elements in the film. Would that be correct?

Well I suppose so. It wouldn't have been very hard for me to do things that because it appears to me, I find it interesting. But of course you can't do very much along these lines because you can't confuse the audience.

You consider making concessions to an audience as something necessary then?

Yes I do. I think you only fool yourself about these things at your

perk. I suppose it's to do with a realistic assessment of your own position, because there are certain things that you can do and certain things that you can't do. It wouldn't have been very hard for me to have turned McCarthy into an art film. I don't see that as being inconsistent with the violent game that I had to do with. The audience has votes, they like things going in and out of the body because that's the sort of world they live in out there. I am also a wee bit wary of the wit in McCarthy because I don't think Americans are very witty, and I think wit is a rather dangerous quality to have in a film.

All the same there are innumerable examples of directors all over the world who have made an over-reliance and gone on to make many films each. Why can't that happen in Australia?

Well if that was, I don't think it can happen now.

Any particular reason?

I suppose because the nature of answering to the established commercial film production framework is so strong. I guess we have really only had films for a couple of years.

Do you think this situation is more likely to come about if there were more active producers in the industry?

Yes, and I would personally favour it. If you can find someone who knows the ropes, who is competent and energetic and with whom you can work, then it is preferable. I did McCarthy as a one-man band because no one else would do it for me. However it is possible that in the near future we may see the emergence of individuals who will produce only, and others who will direct only. I think that would be very good.

Do you see then the possibility of us as "Aussie" or a "Bosse" appearing other films that need not be as commercial?

Well there you are talking about continuity of production over a number of years. Who knows whether during three or four McCarthy-style pictures in a row would allow me to make a picture that I particularly wanted to do, although I recognised it as not being as commercial in the sense of the wide identification. I would be pretty wary of such a situation simply because the sense of Australian society that one might describe as being middle class, affluent and individualised doesn't seem to go to the pictures much. I think they have lost the habit. However given the changing times we live in I can quite easily imagine a situation where they all go again. So I feel a slight scepticism about trespassing what I feel now into the future because it changes so quickly, and these directions of interest, or faith, my past years probably so bloody quickly that you'd better not blink, otherwise it will be over and done with before you know where you are, and the public is maybe whacking onto something else.

You are talking about the kind of material that you make?

Yes I am talking about the contemporary reality of Australian audiences to Australian product.

Surely one of the main responsibilities of a producer is the ability to pick this year what is going to go next year?

Well I think that's in it too. In a hypothetical situation of four years ago, three would have been not acceptable, so I have a certain scepticism about projecting my situation forward for another four years. However I am aware in the belief that the level of contemporary sympathy will remain the same.

What's the alternative though?
Oh Christ, I don't know — motor movies, long playing records, anything you like.

Are't almost the same considerations applicable there though?

Producer/Director of *The Great McCarthy*, David Rohrer

mean learning and love scenes has many similar problems.

Of course, I mean love scenes aren't going to have the bloody field to themselves for very long. A guy might come along with a radio-active falanga rod or something.

Or even people who like their loaves long...

But you also see it if you look at the body of Australian literature up till recent times. Most of our better writers habitually reported the society as which they lived, and concerned themselves with a removal from the immediate here and now to something that happened maybe sixty years ago in the bush. Contemporary social realism as applicable to the vast mass of Australians is not something we have been terribly concerned with, and it is only recently that Australian films have said it. If you look at John Murney's *The Naked Beauty*, and *Slack*, you'll see that they are a complete watershed of everything that went before. Remember that charming picture an English company shot here about an artist who goes up to Queensland and meets this girl...

"Age of Consent"...

Charming. But has relevance to these people out there is relatively distant, whereas *Beauty*, *Slack*, *Bazza*, *Lilide* and *Albie* have got areas of immediate identification all over the place. It's a sort of familiar land where there's somebody-headed and boppers' boy battles out in the out-

"McCarthy the Great is the brilliant young footballer from the bush determined to make good in the bright lights of the city. One of the great dance-down heroes, McCarthy is a completely inept social climber, and his incredible adventures as he struggles to cope with the toughness and harshness of modern urban life give rise to a series of hard-eyed observations about life in Australia."

Barry Oakley

back.

Do you really see "Albie Purple" as social realism?

To the extent that it's a comedy taking place within a socially recognizable situation with socially recognizable characters. It satirizes all sorts of fantasies such as great sexual prowess, and that's what those people have.

Is "McCarthy" similar to that?

Yes, of course it is.

Where do the elements of comedy take their starting point? The character of McCarthy?

No. McCarthy, like *Albie*, is a romance. He is bopish, likable and unrepentant, and he moves through a domestic landscape tinged with Dickensian-style grotesque. They are the ones who get the laughs, because McCarthy himself does not initiate action, others do it for him.

It seems to be a very strange thing, but "Between Wars", "The Cars That Ate Paris", "Albie Purple" and "The Great McCarthy" have all got romance lead characters.

Well in *Cars* of course he is an extreme romance and so domestic landscape is immediately destructive. I myself have not seen *Between Wars*, but he is in *Albie*, as you say, and *Bazza*.

Bazza's more of a romantic through.

Yes he is a sort of innocent figure, but there is something of the romance in his. Slack at one stage is a clown-like figure who imposes himself on his domestic landscape. In terms of tragic drama the most fearful and terrible character I have filmed recently would be Ken in *The Family Man* from *Lilide* who was indulging action all the time. The energy comes from constant points of confrontation — bang, bang, bang. Actually Ken always gets a lot of laughs.

Do you think it's because of an uneasy identification?

I have a few thoughts about that, but I don't really know. I think primarily people are just reassured by the identification, they recognize it as selfish and so forth but they identify strongly with it — take any of the bloody

ideas that you like. McCarthy is not a self-image. If I feel anything for the picture I suppose it is because I detect in McCarthy a quality of great charm, but the thing that I know the audience will support at the box office is its body, its energy. The incidents never stop, they just go on and on.

Is McCarthy a very complex character?

We'll be much more complex than he seems.

Is he possible without one having to delve into his complexity?

Oh yes. Sometimes I think that the film is actually somewhat in its own right, though of course audiences would never go far that in a million years. What does it is its constant development. It is quite unlike *Bazza* and *Albie* in that respect because both of those had quite rapid characters, whereas in McCarthy there is plain old-fashioned narrative and character development.

So McCarthy changes a lot during the film?

You be damn. There is a process of maturation. When we first meet him in the country he is quite unambitious but he develops the ability to become self-conscious. Then at the end there is a transition to self-renewal — but it doesn't interfere with the laugh or story.

Is the film going to be equally accessible to Americans and Englishmen?



Director of Photography Bruce McPherson points out a blinding for Director David Baker

Oh, it's immediately accessible to anyone really. Its thematic structure is to do with the role of dominance or romantic individuals, of which there are a number of unimpressive examples and one very attractive one. Another thing that I feel about McCarthy is that it is a very good film for women. A lot of the middle class and cultivated son of women would have had a distaste for Bazza. There wouldn't have been too many who lived Able older, which I personally would have thought a much more delightful picture.

As producer of "McCarthy" what do you think of the recent criticism in the Australian film industry of the wage crisis charge, relative to women technicians?

What is the nature of the criticism?

That a member of a crew will, after completing a film, charge say \$30 a week more than he did before. Now you have a situation where some technicians in Australia are getting more than someone like Harold Lloyd who has shot well over 20 big American features such as "Touch of Evil" and "The War Lord".

Well, of that I don't know, but it is a constantly fluctuating market. It's not my view by any means that the most well-known technicians are necessarily the most competent, and by most well-known presumably those who are able to command the highest fees. I certainly think that we have technicians in this country in all departments who can quite comfortably make \$300,000 or \$250,000

"One thing that I'm going to be very interested in is the reception accorded the screenplay as opposed to the novel. I read 'McCarthy' once and actually I am quite eager to read it again."

David Baker

pictures, and that includes actors. There are probably the only technicians in the world capable of that nowadays in the world.

So you are happy with the standard of technicians on "McCarthy"?

Yes. For this style of low-budget feature. Where I think we are going to have tremendous difficulty is going the next step, if there is to be one. That is to very quickly cope with the further requirements of a \$400,000 picture, because I don't think that our levels of expertise are there yet. This isn't technical expertise, it is to do with attitudes and experience, and not only in the wide technicians. They certainly reflect the values and standards of the larger spheres around them.

So you think that perhaps in the future budgets will increase, rather than stay on the quarter of a million which they are at the moment?

I don't think that, I don't think that at all. It isn't as simple as that. There are no more than 14 or 15 pictures a year that return film here of greater than \$100,000 in Australia. However Australia is going to be a very good market, and it is certainly better than England. Film audiences in the United Kingdom have dropped away quite emphatically. They have only

20 per cent of the cinema audience they had in the mid 1950s.

Well if film here in this country is not likely to exceed \$100,000, does "McCarthy" plan to rely the film's share of its money from overseas markets?

No Sir. I am not terribly familiar with overseas markets and at the moment I am not all that concerned because it is designed to go out and make its cash back here.

What would it have to get here in gross box office returns to cover the original investment of \$150,000?

Oh, a million, million and a quarter.

How many films have done that in Australia in the last two years?

Not too many.

How about?

Maybe half a dozen. So I don't think that there's much chance as the Australian feature of Australian pictures costing more than \$150,000, unless they have access to quite lucrative markets elsewhere.

Do you see it being possible to make a film far less than that which could command a similar audience?

No I don't. You can certainly make a nice little picture for let's say \$80,

\$60 or \$100,000, but to get the value into the limited profit necessary to return all the money here, you have to go in my view to a figure in the region of \$200,000.

How many months would it have to hold down a reasonable sized cinema in the city?

Maybe six, eight months. But to return to your previous question, talking about technicians and so forth, for me the larger question is the technicians placed on to by the sort of people we are. The increasing thing to me seems to be three further increments of experience that take place once you have reached 90 or 95 per cent. I am not only talking about technicians but also about the financing people, exhibition people, actors, writers, directors. I think we have always had the capacity to, in a rather bookish sort of way, go from the bottom, work straight up to 90 per cent. I think our crews and our actors are dynamic in the sense that they have fairly high energy levels. However if you work from 90 to 95 per cent that additional 5 per cent is very only at the cost of a considerable amount of energy and application to the film 90 per cent. Do you follow me there? I don't think we are ready to do this yet. I certainly don't think we have the technicians in the country, not that they are not personally capable of it.

Do you apply this to directorial ability as well?

Oh yes.



Boots open over David Cooper struggles to pick up the mantle from Max Githers' established star.

Is this extra 5 per cent something which you yourself require and are not getting?

Well I'm no different to you, I have got the same angst and legs and so forth. I am just a part of the whole world I move in. On occasions the absence of these increments of confidence does irritate me and makes me wince, which is a quite private act of weeping and crying. It is not reflected in the rest of the audience or the actors. Maybe they are winning privately too and they are also trying to put their finger on what it is that disturbs and causes them. You are raising a film question: you have got two men and a dog, and a small amount of money. I would say that you are capable of getting about 90 per cent of your magazine done very quickly and with a considerable dynamic dash and style, but it's that extra bit, it's the last 10 per cent which is to do with relaxed authority. Massive, comfortable, elegant, self-assurance, and that perhaps disturbs you too. Now that is the sort of thing that I am trying to express.

Do you think this is partly due to the unstable nature of the Australian film industry where people are always slightly fearful of what's going to happen? It is hard to be at ease in the film industry here.

I think film industry all over the world have always suffered what you describe as instability. I think it's to do with the body of Australian culture as it exists at the moment. I

don't think there is really fine writing though I think there is some brilliant writing, but financial and great assurance and authority are something else. There's excellence and on occasions there's brilliance in the industry, but it's those extra hard won points that take the thing further that are important.

It doesn't sound like there are the sort of things which make the difference between a viable and non-viable industry, it sounds more personal. Perhaps these things are only perceived by a small percentage of the audience anyway.

Yes, I would say that. I think they are perceived outside our own social and cultural context and I think our slight anxieties, uncertainties, dimensions are perceived elsewhere by close observers.

There are not dimensions that have been betrayed, but rather are dimensions that shouldn't have been there in the first place?

That's right. I don't think we see them in this way because of what we are. It seems just another viable part of our own culture. I haven't thought it completely through as yet, but I sometimes do feel it on it as a half-fledged sort of theatre concept.

Do you recognise it in your own work?

Well obviously not, otherwise I would as ruthlessly as possible kick it out.

So you think that it is something that

was recognised and is eradicated, and it is not just a lack of expertise or professionalism?

No, I don't think it's to do with particular persons.

Is it to do with a million of sophisticated criticism that leads people to question such things in their work?

No, no. I suppose one could get muddled on this point but I don't really carry away much from most of the film assessments written by people in Australia. I feel the lack deeply. I would say there would not be more than five pictures a year that I might feel deeply enough to want to write about. It is probably tedious to expect an individual who looks at four pictures a week and writes about 200 reviews a year to write about them on that level.

So you are saying that it is the standard of expectation and the level of criticism here that perpetuates this state of affairs?

Yes, yes, I mean when you look into your girlfriend's face... What I am talking about is that the indirect ascription of the scene is a sacred sort of thing. But I can't easily see a situation in which those further elements of excellence might be achieved, because I do think at the request we are on the \$200,000 budgets for some time.

You don't think it is possible to reach these increments in a film with that sort of budget. I personally would have thought that the budget was ab-

solute given the ingredients were there. After all there have been a lot of good films made on a budget of \$250,000.

You but then don't forget that it doesn't apply only to the technician, it is primarily to do with mobility.

Yes, I would have thought that the technical aspect was the least important.

Yes, I think it's to do with off with writing, editing, directing and acting.

Well nearly all these things are fairly independent of budget?

Well let's get back to our hypothetical \$60,000 picture. I don't think, although obviously I don't know, that an \$65,000 picture could get out of the Australian market \$200,000 in film here. I think you have got to pack more into your film and then packing costs a lot of money, though as you know many superb pictures have been and will be made around the \$60,000 mark. When we are talking about Supersizer's Mate on the one hand and MacCamley on the other, we are talking about the difference between \$20,000 and \$250,000, yet Supersizer's Mate is in my view a considerable vehicle.

But nowhere near as commercial even as a lightweight film?

No, I don't think that. I think the writing's quite clearly in the mix with films like *Basta* and *Alvin*, and films like *High Anxiety* and *Rightly*, but they also have a measure of harsh subtextiveness. ■

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12. *Blas. May I offer you this glass of champagne
madrone!*



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9. *Prenez plaisir les yeux
enfin / Répéter les images*



13



17



10. *partie / Les heures sont finies / Le roman est à l'abri
et fin / Rache à jamais mortels / Quand tout est fini*



14



18



17 *Any- May I have that?*
Woman: Of course.



21



22



23



24



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35

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Reviews:

SLEEPER

Ken Quinlan

In a funeral oration for humor George Mikan, a man of altogether different stabilities to Woody Allen, commented: "Humor is as dead as Chaplin, Keaton and Lloyd-Glass are. It cannot be revived, it cannot survive. But it can resurrect. This apt concept is the purveyor of humor, it is — and will, one day — be the proper subject of it." For Woody Allen this apt is not only the proper subject of humor, it is perfect and, in a sense, the humor that Mikan lauds is resurrected in the work of this comic, apt-named New York neophyte.

Sleeper is Allen's fourth film. His first was *Take the Money and Run* (1969) in which he played a young thief, whose audacity was to become a great criminal. The film established the success of his comic's personal style which amalgamated a good deal of warmth and charm — qualities that screen comedy has lacked for a long time. *Bananas* (1971) was delayed in its release in America. It is a companion piece to *Take the Money and Run* and shares its satirical cynicism. Allen plays a heart-broken New Yorker who joins the revolution in a small South American dictatorship and becomes its President. In *Bananas* it is clear that the uneasy relationship that exists between Allen as performer and Allen as writer-director is responsible for the stop-start structure and the frequent falling away of sequences into banality. However, if enlightened Allen as a combination of writer and a director of cinematic resources. Everything *Yes Always Wanted to Know About Sex* but *Wary About It* Ask (1972) with its seven episodes, each a parody of a particular genre, began a consolidating process that in July 1973 of *Sleeper*. Everything displays a new precision and control over the material that is especially evident in those episodes in which Allen himself does not appear. It is not that there are the funniest or the most comically successful, it is rather that they show Allen as a director finding his responses, not yet able to replace them completely through his own persona but ready to go. (He does in *Sleeper* and in that sense the film is a beginning. Allen also scripted and appeared in *What's New Pussycat?* and *Play It Again Sam* both the work of other directors, both revealing in their way but without the comic punch of Allen's own work.

The sleeper is Mike Moscone (Woody Allen) who has been frozen in a tank for 300 years. He awakes like a packet of frozen peas, Mike comments with two centuries of sleep belabored behind him. The world is a police state ruled by the Leader, a Dr. Strangelove-like entrance seen only in photographs and on video screens. Mike has been revived by doctors who are in sympathy with the underground movement. They need someone with no identity record to help destroy the Axis Project which is designed to wipe out all subversive elements. They are headed by the Security and Mike escapes disguised as a Doctor (Diane Keaton) who makes sappy statements about art that recall Leonardo Dornice and writes verse influenced by Rud McKinn. When the cable Mike

to a Domesticon service center to have his head replaced by kidneys for and escapes, pursued by the bungling Security. Mike is captured and a beauty contest is used to bewitch him. A list learns the meaning of individuality and freedom with the underground and finally liberates Mike. To counter the bewitching they use some psychotherapy which involves Mike re-creating the Sunday dinner at his parents' home when he told them his wife was seeking a divorce ("She thinks I'm a pervert. I don't like the author!"). The sequence includes the playing of a comic song, A Scientist Visited Dorian with Allen as Victor Leigh and Liza as Marion Bonardo. Finally, they promote the Axis Project to know that the Leader has been destroyed except for his nose. By a special operation known as "donors" an attempt is being made to rewire the Leader. Mike and Liza, disguised as diving surgeons manage to kidnap the nose and destroy it. It is necessary to rewire the nose in any more durable than it is impressively simple, structured to even the comic elements and provide the forward drive that the previous film lacked. Whereas earlier films were co-scripted with Mickey Rose, *Sleeper* has assumed humorist Marshall Bruckner as Allen's co-writer.

Because silent comedy has finally and undeniably established itself there has been a reluctance to admit the components of the script set to the music of the film. Despite critics' carping about the awareness of the machine, the most successful sound comedies have reaffirmed the slip-stick tradition and overlaid it with a daring verbal humor. They have utilized the

full resources of cinema. Though others have tried, only W. C. Fields, the Marx Brothers, Jerry Lewis and Woody Allen have succeeded. Allen, of course, has not reached the degree of sophistication in his humor that the others have, but he is pushing in that direction. He is drawing heavily on his Jewish background in a way that Jerry Lewis never has and he is writing and directing with increasingly more command over gags, situation, narrative development and his own comic persona.

Allen has become something of a master of the comic cross-reference. As well as the broad interpretations of other comedians' styles that were prevalent in his early work too, in *Sleeper* he makes most subtle gestures. As well as the adoption of Chaplin's made for the small he cuts to music that are small changes of intention and style of delivery that refer to other comedians. In an extraordinary sequence where Mike and Liza expose their customer helplessness to each other after they have penetrated the headquarters of the Axis Project, Allen and Keaton plunge through a whole range of comic cues — Jack Benny and Rochester, George Burns and Grease Allen, Bob Hope and Bing Crosby, Abbott and Costello. The references are skillfully contained in only a few minutes of the infection of a single line.

Most of Allen's humor revolves around sex. Even those parts that are apparently about other things, food for instance, really have a sexual bent. Since no one is free to be or not to be sexual, sex is always funny. We can repress ourselves, but we are incapable of denying our sexual nature, if we do not laugh we are doomed. Woody Allen is appealing just because he makes that link of freedom funny. His satirizing and self-mockery are not so much as satire for a while that the facts of existence are more flexible than we suspected. He is essentially an innocent film comic personality displays a wholesome, amiable and self-consciousness that rejects all discourses and seeks spontaneity, warmth and human involvement, so that even at its most bitter his humor seems curiously attractive. His humor is deeply rooted in the belated sexual customs, political restrictions of the 1960s and '70s. When Allen, like all great comedians, has constructed his own world around him, he has not trapped himself as Jacques Tati does in *Monsieur*



Woody Allen as a Domesticon rebel waiting his turn with the "nose" with *Sleeper*



Between Wars

Left above: At the *Fabergé* (Famous Players-Lasker)
Photo: Henry the Wizard (John Armstrong) pulls a
hoof for Dr. Trephine (Curtis Ingersoll)

Left: Director: Michael Thumshelle shakes out a
hoof through the *Academy 22*

Left below: Turner in the transfer — from the First
World War sequence of *Between Wars*

Right above: The tension and dilemma of Trephine
with his super model close with Deborah (Judy
Morris)

Right below: Dr. Peter Aronson (Arthur Dignard)
punches on the couch in the *Indomitable* production
punches in scenes with his partner Trephine in the
early 1940s





PETERSEN: Director Tim Burt (left) discusses a scene with Jack Thompson (Petersen) and Wendy Hughes (Professor Kerk) with

This refusal to linger and draw the most from a situation has its merit. I think, in a deep-seated fear of being bored, or having — the great Australian obsession with speed (fast, overreaction, motor cars, etc.) which leads to limited expectations on the part of the audience to the cinema. Such expectations only very well be justified, there is a natural reluctance to constrains very long on one thing, but films which cater, however unconsciously, for this reluctance are leaving themselves open to charges of superficiality, unless they are put together with a scrupulous regard for the shared dynamics of such an approach.

In some ways, Petersen reminds one of a television series episode in an irritatingly fragmentary way. I saw the film at Melbourne University's Union Theatre with a vacillating, under-occupied student audience. The reception was kinder to that given to an Engineering Review — appreciative, laudatory, casual. As each familiar theme came up it was greeted with a roar of recognition, by such familiar English department type or talented sixth-former, an ironic cheer.

The episodes are loosely linked within the film chiefly because they are shored into a common setting, or focus on one person — Petersen. Apart from this elementary unity, there appears to have been no real attempt to build up any detailed picture of Tony Petersen, electronics, third year Arts student, father: Consequently, one's involvement and sympathy with him remains depersonally low.

Admittedly, Jack Thompson has his back against the wall as he tries to make Petersen — a naïvely, all-Australian blond — an interesting character. Thompson's style is so plastic it veers on the one-dimensional, and he persists in reminding me throughout, disconcertingly, of a soap-opera Paul Hagen.

Certainly, a number of things happen to Petersen in the film, things that ought even to have a profound effect on his life. His affair with the wife (Wendy Hughes) of his associate professor of English (Arthur Dignan) founders and then breaks up; his disconnection with his sweet little suburban-boyfriend (Jacki Weaver) grows, along with his delusion of an intellectual adequacy, to fill his final scenes and renders the varied causal possibilities open to a

TV repatriation — now quoting Shakespeare as he writes.

Petersen also, as it happens, happens to be an ex-star footballer and the age of a clergyman (Charles Tingwell) — an unlikely but promising situation which should have been revealed earlier on. In fact, we have very little data on Petersen himself, except what the film chooses to reveal of his physical prowess, enthusiastic but tacit might be the kindest description. Indeed, on the strength of several recent films it is now possible to draw

up a composite picture of the Australian screen star: quick as the draw but short on staying power, and only looking as brave. Still, to his fair, the writers don't seem to compile much — though there again one assumes they are without a worthwhile standard of comparison.

For all this, it is not hard to see the essentials of a very good film are here — buried in the script, heavily disguised or just wilfully ignored as they may be. There are some fine and later implications about the contrasting worlds of academic dullness, about depression and straightforward, but indirect simplicity which could have made Petersen into some sort of contemporary plunger's progress, as ironic sharing of the ironic and delicate awaiting an essentially mediocre zone.

Throughout, Petersen has remained faithful, perhaps too faithful, to the spirit of the material. Apart from some visual clichés the film is consistently good to look at, moves as smoothly as possible through some fairly tricky speeches, and has an overall success of touch that makes one wish all the effort had been expended on something rather better thought out.

What is missing is the hard selective energy that might have discarded Williamson's red herrings and welded the remainder into something less good-naturedly compromising. The script's tactless refusal to grapple with or even one from the implications of its material results in an uneasy, stalling gesture that ferts with reality and the business of living, only to make do with the soft option, the screen exhalation of grief with bowed humour. It underlines the steep difficulties of making a 'serious' comedy.

PETERSEN: Screened by The Royal Production Company, Phoenix Film, Quince of Photography, Robin Cameron. Edited by David Russell. Music by Peter Burt. Sound mixer: Ken Stennett. Props: Jack Thompson (Tony Petersen), Jack Weaver (Alan Petersen), Wendy Hughes (Phyllis Kent), Arthur Dignan (Charles Kerk), Christine Anwar (Liam), Helen Stone (Jane), John Ford (Pete), Jacki Weaver (Mary), David Phillips (Diane). Color Australia 1974. 98 mins.



Robert Redford (right) Once on the 1000 000 plus winning pool constructed at Pinewood Studios for Jack Clayton's *The Great Escape*.

THE GREAT GATSBY

Rod Nishep

"Gatsby tossed out straight in the end, it is what played on Gatsby, what fast dual flowed in the male of his dreams that temporarily closed out my interest in the absolute across and shortened stages of man."

The *Gatsby*ization of America began the day Paramount producers David Merrick and Robert Ross began negotiating for the property with F. Scott Fitzgerald's daughter. Companies with products likely to benefit from one-off through association with the \$4.4 million film, produced 16 million worth of footage and related topics to top Paramount's existing \$1.5 million advertising budget. (Initially, Gatsby was to have been a co-screenplay to *Ernest* with the beautiful Ali MacGraw whose madcap acting talent and rooking popularity had drawn enough adulation of participation from Peter Bogdanovich, Arthur Penn, Mike Nichols, Warren Beatty, Jack Nicholson and Miramax.)

Robert Redford and Mia Farrow were the final choice for the film. Gatsby and Jack Clayton were signed to direct. This was an odd choice, since Clayton's poor financial track record had kept him away from film for nearly eight years. However, his critical standing on *Five* (and *Enter*, *Room at the Top*, *The Pumpkin Eater*, *The Innocents* and *One Winter's House*) was relatively high and despite the mixed syntheses provoked by the selection of an Englishman, Clayton was one filmmaker about his capacity to handle the film.

"I wouldn't feel qualified to do a story set in the Bronx, let's say. But apart from the romantic side of the film and Gatsby's obsession (and I think I understand obsession quite well), it is a story about class. What is something I love. Didn't Mary say there are differences between classes but wouldn't very little difference between nations—between the English and the American race?"

Getting taken into the project, though, was only half the battle. For the dream team (Clayton, Redford, Farrow, Dern, Coppola etc.), Paramount's efforts to stemroll a report were overpowering. Redford felt the venture to be in a state of permanent crisis. "We just played we could get finished with one week before the tent crumpled in on us or was simply blown away. The story of course was all that type and promotional bulimia Paramount arranged that threatened to destroy us all."¹ At the centre of that storm was the highly volatile relationship amongst between Clayton and producer, David Merrick. (The latter, believing that "long hair started with my Mamma, Gatsby,"² loved Gatsby would bring back hair for me.) Merrick's interest to have a screenplay number of choice during the production of the film, *Joe DiMaggio's Fighting* (The Great Gatsby) and a mutual, if begrudging, understanding was reached by the end. However Clayton still felt it necessary to carry a Bolson knife strapped to the inside of his leg and spend a lonely moment at the end of the first day's shooting, "systematically mutilating out the window the main calendar, first with a bench and then with a butt knife."

Frustrated by critics who feared the new film would destroy their nostalgic memories of the novel, *The Great Gatsby* is developing into a box office disaster. Potential investors, expecting a showcase Lowrey story have become confused by the critics' lightning conviction that Gatsby is not only a dash film but one which is too heavy a translation of Fitzgerald's book. Whenever the novel might have been, it at least had the potential to be changed from a literary celebration of a love-faded hero out of step with history into a biting satire of the "barbarically wealthy." Using Fitzgerald as a starting point, Clayton and script

writer Francis Ford Coppola have subtly moved Gatsby in this direction and appear to have lost almost everybody, critics and audience alike, along the way.

Clayton's intended indictment of the rich and their ostensible overly sentimentalized the sacrifice of what Fitzgerald saw as Gatsby's "brave intent" and its replacement with a more "bored" view of the social set and their destructive personal relationships. Some selections plays Nick Carraway, the story yearns old bond salesman who comes to Long Island to spend a summer with his cousin (Doree Backman) and her friends. When Nick finds her reckoning upland in the morning, she finds him with a lady (Mia Farrow). It is really your first love. I'm puzzled by happiness." Mia Farrow plays Daisy as a stepmother, a star of superficial charm, controlled and manipulative. She desires the extremely irresponsible Nick with an apparent victory and her husband for her most, charming husband. Gatsby himself at one point asks Daisy why she once loved him "unlovable." Her reply, "What could I have done? You boys, Jay Gatsby. How's your head?", clearly reminds him of how far he has had to come and what he has had to go through to be with the woman for the first time in his life. Dern is about to make with Gatsby. Her second love, however, she appears to have been in their first, finally trusting the renewing of the affair as a passing category of another passing category from some other lost, Long Island summer.

Redford's Gatsby brings the necessary style and theme to the film's portrait of a man whose single-minded pursuit of an ideal love develops into a private reality which separates him from the rest of the world. The novel's Gatsby's great appeal is really a romantic quest, a quest which ultimately reduces him to the post-war level of a solitary figure standing in the rain while far in the morning to watch the light go out in his love's window. His controlled self-only nearly overcomes Daisy's desperate intensity. Redford believes "Gatsby dies because he's a scholar. He had the strength of will to get to where he is, but the first mistake is that he believed you can repeat the past."

When Dern joins Tom Buchanan into a violent and empty-headed socialite whose idea of love is to draw blood and kill it away. His reaction to Gatsby's aura of nostalgia love is as classically perverted as his doubtful possession of Daisy. Remembering Gatsby's past, he becomes intent on destroying his "own" wealth, his thoughtlessness and arrogance allowing him to continue to believe that Gatsby does the air that killed his system, Myrtle Wilson. Daisy's predictable reaction to the accident, on the other hand, is to wrap herself in a cocoon of self-protection. She sees Gatsby's disaster as a shield, and the assurance born of her time and position as a prop to live on and, eventually, to be used by. The nightmare at the close of Gatsby's green light turns out to be a nightmare, a socialist nightmare, too afraid to face its own darkness.

Nick Carraway is the chosen observer who becomes captured and, inevitably, manipulated by Daisy's charms. His prestige to the film status is obvious. "My father once said to me, 'When you criticize, remember everybody isn't mad.' The advantage you have." Consequently I tend to reserve judgement." Nick becomes Gatsby's trusted friend, his admiration gradually developing into a close personal affinity overlaid with respect for Gatsby's extraordinary perseverance. Ultimately Nick's skepticism and inability to take meaningful social action rates him into the most repulsive character on the film. On the morning of Myrtle's death he is the only person to have any idea of a responsible involvement of the car and the ensuing leading up to her death. Daisy has withdrawn into selfishness and Gatsby, once so sufficiently detached from everyday reality so to be no longer aware of the consequences of his behavior. Yet Nick's attachment to the wealthy

Gatsby has become a blind acceptance, and he tries to be a man who only looks before jumping into it. He remains in that state until the end, and who has subsequently not only tried to bare the evidence but has apparently forgotten the incident, that "they're a rotten crowd. You're worth the whole damn bunch of them put together." Gatsby flashes his smile, that continuing reward for Nick's almost loyalty, and returns to his vastness pool to wait, as always, for Daisy. Waving, Nick tells her to look on Gatsby and on her responsibility. He wishes to suggest a virtue but his greatest weakness. Every word of his detail and nobility, Nick remains over a moment of the patient of his knowledge.

Ultimately, after Gatsby's murder by the love, suffering Wilson, only Nick and Gatsby's father attend the funeral. Nick stands making judgments, but they are always modestly phrased, among them from frustration and despite that from compassion. He feels that the Buchanan "unpleasant" and "unpleasant" and returned back into their own conclusions as whatever it is that keeps them together. Nick notes Tom and Daisy again but are enough to more than an adolescent refusal to shake Tom's hand, still unable to tell Tom the truth about Myrtle's death. The morning is brief, Nick seeing the night Daisy releases her from them, and gradually sighing "Oh Daisy," as she moves off into the sun, lost, misled by a single of nature and being.

It is the work of Nick and not the decided, self-pitying Jay Gatsby who embodies Jack Clayton's vision of the last American dream. Fitzgerald's Gatsby, a failed hero searching backward to achieve his only love, is seen by Clayton as more deserving of sympathy than of loathing. Nick's inability to transform his feelings and observations into critical action and thus to begin changing the world into the dream of Clayton's own attempt to capture Fitzgerald's idea of the "dreamy green light." Nick doesn't attract Fitzgerald's emotional closing line from Gatsby, "So we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past," quite simply because Clayton and Coppola don't believe it.

But for all Jack Clayton's essentially British attempts to infuse the film with sobriety and irony, the greatest irony of all may well be its association with the novel's commercial failure. As historians are likely to look back on *The Great Gatsby* as another lost American dream and to blame Jack Clayton for dumping it somewhere in the mid-Atlantic.

Producer Merrick, for his part, has grossly miscalculated the film's commercial potential and must be suffering the professional consequences of having landed a long-term failure. Yet at the close of shooting, when the *Screen* magazine's Merrick's farewell comments made it clear he had come to understand Gatsby's most important and unrecognized focus.

"The social implications of the film, please me. But Jack Clayton and I are politically somewhat to the left and the film gives a picture of the rich the way we see them. I'm afraid the film will feel tremendously wrong in the great room. They'll find out how the film really has nothing to do with history and big parties. They'll know how terribly anti-social and capitalist Gatsby is."³

1. *Parade Magazine*, "Gatsby, Style and Sound" (March Film Edition 1974), Spring issue.
2. *Parade Magazine*, "The Great Gatsby Revisited," Time 10.7.1976.
3. *Screen*, "Fighting The Great Gatsby" (New York 1974), January/March issue.
4. *id.*, p. 24.
5. *id.*, p. 24.
6. *id.*, p. 23.

THE GREAT GATSBY Directed by Jack Clayton. A Paramount Picture. Produced by David Merrick. Associate producer, Sam Milner. Screenplay by Francis Ford Coppola. Based on the novel by F. Scott Fitzgerald. Director of Photography, Douglas Slovic. Music composed by Nelson Riddle. Edited by Bruce Brown. Screened by Jay Clayton, Designer, John Cox. Props, Screen, Screened by Jay Clayton.



Brilliant as Caroline's (Peggy Cole) hip Marianne holds the rest of the cast at arm's length in *Yakkyu Yak*.

Mia Farrow (Daisy Buchanan), Keanu Reeves (Myrtle Wilson), Scott Wilson (Wilford), Sam Worthington (Pink Carnaby), Louis L'Amour (Gertie Baker), Bruce Dern (Tom Buchanan) U.S.A. (R), 140 mins

YAKKETY YAK

John Tiftener

If there is the answer, as the Christian TV ads so pertinaciously demand, what's the question?

If you're not part of the solution, in *Dave Jones* is *Yakkyu Yak* so inequity asserts, then you're part of the problem.

Which may not mean much, but at least sounds OK. Or which, alternatively, may sound loose but means a great deal. Take your pick. In *Yakkyu Yak* you can have it either way. Both ways. All at once. Is that life? Is that art? Is that politics? Ask Dave Jones before he commits ritual suicide. He'll tell you. But you won't believe him. You won't be able to believe him. Any more than you'll be able to disbelieve him. Take your pick, if you can. Better still take your ass. And behind Yokko Marianne. Why? Why not? Take your pick. The whole that may be said anyway. Just like everything Caroline says. Caroline is stupid, so everything she says goes. One, that is. An extract from her books, which come out and stay out. You've got to have this in a picture. That's life, art, politics. You've got to have levels of meaning. Not necessarily thirty-seven levels, but plenty of levels. To get the critics along eleven times each. A thousand critics eleven times at two backs. So that Dave Jones and Caroline can roast. Caroline will love Dave to her dying day. That's life (art, politics). That's entropy. That's the universe slowly running down. But watch it: entropy can start out good and then peter out to evilness. And where does that leave us? Where does it leave Dave and Caroline? Where does it leave the cinema? It mustn't leave the cinema. Not before the end. And there is no end. No end to entropy. No passing out of the pattering out. But one poster wears out. Peter Carnaby. Out of *Yakkyu Yak*, that is. *Yakkyu Yak* is a film. A piece of film, anyway. A piece of plastic. Made by real stirring Marianne. Marianne, it is impossible Marianne is



Marianne (David Jones) explains to the (Peter Carnaby) that "with a bit of science and some glue one gets to a very lovely bit of life like I, Peter David Jones *Yakkyu Yak*."

Dave Jones is Marianne. *Yakkyu Yak* is his film. About his film. About *Yakkyu Yak*, that is. About the film that never got made. Or did it? No wonder Peter wants out. No wonder he can't get out. Not with all those chickens coming down the stairs. Too late to chicken out. Too late to peck out. Besides, Peter's on chicken. But where does John Flaw come in? Through the same door as the chickens. Same door as the demons building superintendents. But the deputy building superintendent gets murdered. Marianne kills him. You see it happen. You see the truth twenty-four times a second. But did it really happen? Or only in the film? Which film? *Yakkyu Yak*, of course. But *Yakkyu Yak* is a film about the *Yakkyu Yak* that never got made. So what, the murder may have been out of the film that never got made. In which case it never happened. Alternatively, it was scripted. And scripted things never really happen. That's life, art, politics after all. Maybe even entropy. But all scripted when Marianne gets knocked off? We use John Flaw to end the poem. We use him to. What Marianne of course, but he's been dead for centuries. Bulls, he has been, on the screen, now. Murdered by John Flaw. Twenty-four times a second. Well, what the hell, if things get tough you can cut it and no one will ever know. But what about Keanu? Marianne requires her second. A bullet in the brain every two to four times a second. It's the truth. But is it scripted? Is it life in the film that was never made? Maybe it never happened. But Marianne's chest is covered in blood. Marianne's, Keanu's, Marianne's (from poisoning), the deputy building superintendent's blood. Look out. The chickens look out too. Might be plastic though. Things are never what they seem. Less all at all when they are what they seem. It's a matter of what they seem to be. *Yakkyu Yak* explores the scary side of things. They seem to pluck the chickens. To beat them to death. To beat each other to death with chickens. Can you bear that? After all that's life (art, politics). That's film. Film about film. Film about plastic. Film about plastic film. Plastic film about plastic film. See how the levels of meaning snowball? A thousand critics at two levels eleven times over. But it can't last. Nothing lasts. Except plastic. Otherwise entropy all round. Entropy? Entropy? Entropy? A cosmic dolly for discussion of entropy. And screwing. But no screwing for Marianne. Not with this daily. Caroline has screwed 1983 guys. She wants to remember Marianne as the one she didn't. That way she won't confuse him with all the others. Marianne looks disappointed. Is he disappointed? Is he happy? Is he Marianne? Is he Dave Jones? He looks like Norman Macdonald. Even a bit like Johnny O'Keefe with his eyes straightened. Could be anybody. Take your pick (axe, revolver, minkskinner, gun-mike, camera). Who says you can't shoot films around corners? Who says you can't shoot film crews around basement? Who says you don't watch a film that was never made? Who says that what happens in a film that never gets made never happens? Ask Jerry Tompkins, your average man in the street (in the know) in the film (about film). But who asks John Flaw? His authority John Flaw is right here in the film we are making about John Flaw helping to make the film. We are asking him about which never gets made? John, why does the film never get made? Sorry John, that could have been a stupid answer but we'll never know, twenty-four times a second. Cut to Marianne, strong, minuscule. Marianne can make a film about anything. A shoe, a clambroth, a film—anything. So who asks John Flaw? His answer may have been scripted, who else? Who wants to know anyway? The important thing is that we are seen thinking. Not like Hollywood, weighed down with too much theory, too much pretense. We are perfectly free, but even so it's given by reality itself. What's in the film. What film? *Yakkyu Yak*. You mean the film about *Yakkyu Yak*? That's what I said. That's what I thought you said, but sir, Marianne, what about all those ladies, how do we explain that? Explain!

We'll out it all out. It never happened. And now watch me commit ritual suicide in *Yakety Yak*. Kyrle, Masha, by letting a 20,000 pound block of concrete fall on me. But shut, Maurice, it fell on you twenty-four times a second and you're still alive. Of course I am. Did you think I was gonna make the same mistake as all the others and actually go through with it? That is a *fake* 20,000 pound block of concrete. After all, that's fat, fat, politics. But Maurice, is the film a fake too, Maurice? Did we think you were gonna make the same mistake as all the others and actually go through with it?

The above is unrelated solely, and pointlessly, for those who have already made a *Yakety Yak*. To others it should appear as clearly, perhaps and incomprehensible as *Yakety Yak* does to its numerous and detractors alike. *Home Deep Jones*, not me. But don't miss *Yakety Yak*. It's a very entertaining film. Or something.

YAKETY YAK Written, directed, produced and edited by Dave Jones. Production Company: Aardvark Film. Photography by G. Gordon Gray. Assistant Director: Rod Kibbey. Special Consulting: Peter Bailey, David Curran. Sound consultant: Ian Aaron. Andrew Finch. Props: advertising. Art and Set: Robert. Make-up with the assistance of the Experimental Film Unit. Interview with: Patrick Dave Jones (Maurice), John Hunt (Maurice), Peter Connolly (Gib), Peggy Cole (Connolly), John Clancy (Maurice), Building Manager, Rod Kibbey (Kyrle), Doug White (Maurice), Andy Mills (Maurice), and Jerry Topples (Maurice). Book and title: Australia. 1971. 90 minutes. 35 mm.

ASYLUM

Meaghan Morris

In the case of non-commercial films of political significance there is perhaps an accidental alignment to the contemporary day in which such films are released in Australia. Since the early 1960s popular political mythology has been created and defined with great rapidity, and when a film produced for a myth is screened during the definition period the significance of the film is changed, a distance is created, if it no longer quite provides the exalting experience of a communion for devotees, it becomes a little more disapproving. If there is an element of disillusion involved, will the political significance be probably dispensed rather than the reverse.

That is very much the case with Peter Robinson's film *Asylum*, a documentary of life in the Archway Community in North London, one of the psychiatric communities which succeeded R. D. Laing's legendary Kingsley Hall. Laing was certainly one of the great political forces of the 1960s, despite his notorious reputation of being against the contrary, and there is still a great deal of maps in seeing the Man himself. Alone as film Laing the psychiatrist should be distinguished from Laing the sociological phenomenon. As a psychiatrist, he effected a tremendous reform in the theory and method of contemporary psychiatry — though I think the film now illustrates that it was no more than a reform.

As a phenomenon, through the popularity of *The Divided Self*, *The Politics of Experience* and the monstrous *Knots*, he gave the Liberation movement an impetus which was and still is positive, but a legacy of sacred rites in structure the impetus which now seems distinctly negative. 'Experience' sanctified the continuous, which said and did transform the notion of talking about oneself in a consciousness-raising group into a series of circular monologues, an intellectual version of hippy sweat-grazing which considerably replaced political action. Victims, working-class women and murdered homosexuals were all thoughtfully in the mind with various other paraphernalia. *Knots* turned out to be precisely that, a kind of paralysing suspension of all possible



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Books

SCREENING THE SEXES: Homosexuality in the Movies

Parker Tyler, *Anchor Books*

Jaclyn Clark

You may remember that Parker Tyler was *Myles Brock* in the favorite film critic in *Fact*, before the famous operation. *Myles* was working on a book entitled *Parker Tyler and the Films of the Forties*, or the *Transcendental Pantheon*. All *Myles*'s pronouncements on film were straight Tylerian, but sometime in *Myles Brock*dom, both the film and the book, they become proper and faded than their originals. Now the wheel has turned full circle, and *Myles Brock*dom is one of Parker Tyler's subjects, one of the key exhibits in *Screening the Sexes*, a massive investigation into homosexuality in the movies. Tyler has discussed on many occasions, that the movies are gay collective unconscious, and that they contain gay metaphors and much sexual stuff. He is sometimes Jungian, more often Freudian, but most of the time he makes up his myths and his psychology as he goes along. The actors are central to his approach to film, they are seen in sexual images, (he defines the term "sexual image"). Film are vehicles for sexual images like stars, sexual images have a type value, they are valued for their own beauty, for their connection with the saint or deity they depict, and for their place in an artistic tradition of such representations.

For this book he has invented a new myth, a hermaphroditic god of homosexual love who is called *Homos* (*Homos* plus *Erros*), and we follow *Homos* through his (her) (mostly his) metamorphosis, from youth to age, from tragedy to comedy, from paganism to pornography, and in and out of dress, underwear, uniforms and costumes. *Homos* would have interpreted very wisely, so that it includes transsexuals, transvestites, in-text homosexuals, supposed homosexuals, bisexuals, people who hate each other, heterosexual stars who are tall figures to some homosexuals, and quite a few other heterosexuals who make the grade one way or another. Tyler certainly has some surprise in store for us if he let you didn't think there was a homosexual theme in *Madame de Merteuil*, or *The Great Escape*, or a lesbian possibility in *Angels and Demons* (and you didn't notice us to the phallic symbolism of the cucumber sandwiches in *The Importance of Being Earnest*). However, many of Tyler's comments are very plausible, and have already started to colour my memories of films.

One of the author's aims in this book is to plead the cause of "lost sexual freedom" and "persecuted homosexuals". The villains in the case are rather shadowy, but he seems to blame sexual repression on "the bourgeois establishment" with its hypocritical sexual codes. Christianity, and the structures of power politics, like their politics and sex can and should be kept as separate compartments. And this is where he differs most from *Women's Liberation* and *Gay Liberation*. He says

that although a woman may feel politically and economically oppressed in her relationships with men in general, and her husband in particular, in the act of intercourse she can put all that aside, and enter a realm of equality, harmony and bliss. While Tyler regards politics as a violent and unenjoyable business, he is rather complacent about American society. We live, he says, "in a political climate which, for all its religious wars, is democratically free and let-it-be."

Parker Tyler is not only asking in this book to defend sexual freedom, he is also out to enjoy himself, to relax past experience of film, and, as he might say, to make the transcendental position — and where better to look for "lost" it would be more fun for the reader if the writing was better. He has a knack for finding or assuming relevant and clever words. Take for example, "The basic offset sexual structure is archetypal of the human race. Such patterns can exist today actually as well as in culturally abstract patterns." As *Gore Vidal* noted, that sort of thing is an off-the-top stand-up of intellectualism, no alternative necessary. Tyler's arguments proceed backwards at sideways, and he never finishes discussing anything, he always drops it suddenly, picks up something else, and comes back later, like a erratic dog with too many bones. His word choice is exasperating. There are some topics about which he is very uncertain, and that is an excuse, most of us are uncertain about most things these days, but Parker Tyler is really uneasy about it. He contradicts himself again and again, but the language is so readily that perhaps he hasn't noticed. He really can't decide whether it is necessary to have a big penis, or even if it is necessary to have one at all, whether stress is bad and debilitated, or a step in the direction of *Heteros*, whether *Gay Lads* where it's all, or just a lot of scuffs waiting their time picking, whether *Women's Liberation* are tedious Philistine lesbians, or pure Lyonesse in control in long-term adulterous harpings with heterosexual males, whether anti-masculinism means the acceptance of the spirit, or the prebination of *Homos*.

Of course, as Tyler points out, evasion, mystification and disguise are part of the camp tradition, the same codes of the oppressed, but the evasion here is unnecessary and he had faith. Another part of the camp tradition is irony, though "he said that they're good." And Parker Tyler writes so badly, and it creates my sense that he was trying to be kidding. If that is so, he is doomed to failure, like the pop artists Nick Cave and Allen Jones, because the glory of which is its innocence, and that glory never descends upon those who try.

Following the example of the Black movement and *Women's Liberation*, some *Gay Liberationists* have suggested that homosexuals must reclaim their own culture. But when and what is gay culture? It is clear from Tyler's book that there is a culture created by and for homosexuals, but it is not altogether clear that it is worth reclaiming. The case against gay culture has been

put most strongly by a small group of New York men calling themselves *Revoluntary Heterosexuals*. They sit in their Manhattan "bagels"

and offered a subculture in the patriarchal wheel is designed to keep us oppressed and also increase the oppression of women. This subculture involves a combination of anti-masculine manner and self-mockery known as camp.

Certainly the films for and by gays which Tyler mentions are almost all made by gays. The main exception is a lesbian film, *The Pit of Loneliness*, which was directed by a woman, Jacqueline Audry, and written by Claire from the novel *Oliver* by Oliver. Of course there are many films about lesbians made by and for men. But Tyler does not grasp the distinction at all. He even describes *Goldfinger* as representing an anti-male war cry: "from the female side!" And after discussing *Alfred Hitchcock's The Girl with the Golden Eyes* he mistakenly remarks, "Remember, by the way, that part of being a lesbian is to compete in terms of dominant-masculine psychology." Well, that's not the way I play the game, Mr. Tyler!

While Tyler gives us some evidence for the existence of a gay culture, he gives us much more evidence to support an observation made by a friend of mine — that it is often homosexuals who, in a strange and self-defining volition, define and elaborate the heterosexual stereotypes for the rest of society. Among others, Tyler mentions the "great lover", *Don Juan*.

Tyler is one of the best writers about stars. His portraits of *Mae West*, *Katherine Hepburn*, *Burt Reynolds*, *Frank Sinatra*, *Clifford Webb* and *Jerry Lewis*, are crude but funny. He writes of *Mae West*, "What homo society a comic art world must have to do the perfect evocation of *Mae West*, as *Madame Superior*, whose sexuality is of a casual defiance and whose lips reflectly as that of the *Commodore* in *Chief of the Armed Forces*." There may have been a filmic instance of *Mae West* displaying kindness towards a child, but I don't recall any. Maybe that notable gap in her territory of goodness was due to a personal handicap: she couldn't always bend over at the waist! And perhaps there is an answer to a puzzle there. I have always wondered why certain women become cults among homosexuals, (usually male homosexuals), and others do not. Why *Mae West*, *Erin O'Brien* and *Anita Loos* (*Social Ladies*)? Why not *Elizabeth Taylor* or *Sophia Loren*? The barometer of the subculture can sometimes even to the point of absurdity, but they are infinitely and awfully close to it. There are two perfect examples, *Paul and Gerald*, and they misread, as *Low Reed* does now, to make their continued anarchy, their very presence with us, also a prodigious triumph. The heroes are different from other women because they are always women. And it is quite understandable that when men want to identify with women, or even temporarily become women, they want all the pleasure and the triumph, and none of the pain.

Because it deals about to death, and its preoccupations are so limited, this book cannot be recommended as a work of reference. And



Books:

because of the tragic writing I won't blame you if you don't read it all. But there is something we owe here from Parker Tyler, and that is that a film never has just one meaning. It is necessary to ask questions of films as he does, to cross-examine them, to ask the obvious questions and the outrageous questions, to ask the thing you first thought of, and the thing you did not (dire mistake), and after that, still more questions.

VISIONARY FILM: The American Avant-garde

P. Adams Sitney, Oxford University Press, New York, 1974

MOVIE JOURNAL: The Rise of the New American Cinema 1929-71

Joan Miskin, Collier Books, New York, 1972

UNDERGROUND FILM: A Critical History

Parker Tyler, Eorgman, New York 1968. Reprinted in Penguin Books, 1974.

Alta Thom

The American avant-garde film has been glibly and widely written about extensively in film journals and books. Despite all this, we have had few opportunities to see much in Australia, where the American narrative film has a firm grip on our culture.

The popular press has done the American avant-garde a disservice in sensationalising their work (at a time when they disregarded the taboos on depicting sexuality), or reducing their explorations (Andy Warhol's *Empire* has been a standing joke for almost six years), and the mass serious writers have generalised about the films in ways that are like (Kluge's) *Jeune fille* (Tyler) or (Shapiro's) *Yankee Doodle*. With the rare exceptions of the films that have been possible in Australia, it is not surprising that the American avant-garde is not regarded as important and that as M.A. students at an Australian university can write a thesis on contemporary film theory and ignore the American avant-garde altogether.

What happened in the United States about the time of the Second World War was that individual filmmakers denied that the theatrical and literary traditions, from which cinema had derived most of its aesthetics in the previous forty years, were exhausted, and that new cinema ideas could be found in the aesthetics of poetry, painting and dance. The 'film poems' that resulted opened up new dimensions for cinema, even the avant-garde movement that emerged very early related to the European experimental film tradition, transposed in the USA during the war with the artists who originated it.

At the time the movement was called 'Experimental', an unfortunate name that implied something ineptive that was secondary to the mainstream of cinema. Ignorance has led to this state misconception being perpetuated in Australia some twenty years later by the Australian Council for the Arts. Just as poetry is not regarded as less worthy than prose or drama in literature, so the poetic cinema is not any less worthy than the narrative cinema. And it is quite stupid to judge the poetic cinema in terms of the narrative cinema. Different aesthetic goals.

The search for new aesthetics for film has been the concern of the American avant-garde over the last thirty years, demonstrated not only through filmmaking, but also in critical and theoretical

writings that penalised the production of films. Much of these were published in the New York journal *Film Culture*, and an anthology of these writings was edited by P. Adams Sitney for Praeger in 1970. The two major theoretical ideas of the American avant-garde are Stan Brakhage, with his concept of the cinematic eye (an eye that looks as much toward into the filmmaker's being as outward to his external world), and Peter Kubelka (an Austrian who frequently lectures in the USA) with his concept of the frame as the central unit of filmmaking.

In the foreword to the critical writers of the American avant-garde, *Adrian Stiner*, James Miskin and Parker Tyler, Tyler has been associated with the avant-garde from the forerunners, but has been neither contemporary of developments since the late fifties, when the American avant-garde began to leave the European avant-garde film tradition behind, abandon the film poem and count a decade that derived from literary modernism in the literary writing process. Because of the Tyler's cynical and rather superficial study of 1950, now repeated by Poughon, is hardly worth the paper it's printed on.

Miskin's criticism has often tended to be irrelevant, resulting from his highly impressionistic style, his total projection of his own being, prejudices and all, into his perception of others' work. Most of it has been published in a weekly column in the *Pittsburgh Courier* in New York under the title of 'Movie Journal', a record of the changes in film as they have affected Miskin. The selection of these columns, published by Collier in 1972 in *Movie Journal: The Rise of the New American Cinema 1929-71* reflects Miskin's deepening involvement with the American avant-garde film (he was quite hostile to it in the 1950s when he founded *Film Culture*), and his repeated attempts to come to terms with the radical changes in film culture that came to him through the *Film-makers' Co-operative*, the *Film-makers' Club* and more recently through *Anthology Film Archives*.

Miskin's fellow creator of *Anthology* is P. Adams Sitney, responsible with Miskin for the massive *New American Cinema* project that issued *Empire* in the 1960s, a movie deeply involved with the film and film industry of the American avant-garde. He now told me how he used to send a school to go into New York and meet filmmakers, discuss films and write a film magazine. I said I had delivered a lecture on *Director Kravchenko's Madam Tenebris* (1945) that was the most obscure talk on film that I have ever given. He brings me some permission to hear in his book *Movie Journal*. The *American Avant-garde*, which took some years to prepare, and is the result of thousands of hours spent with filmmakers and repeated viewings of their films. It contrasts considerably with the superficial film books that abound these days, often written by people who haven't seen all the films they are writing about.

Sitney's genesis is strongly conditioned by the *Reformist* movement in art, and in particular the critical discourse related to modernist poetry. Uchida, Gene Youngblood, who worked in sociological and technological experiments to describe and analyse certain types of avant-garde film, Sitney used the vocabulary of literary criticism in conjunction with the filmmakers' own theoretical writings. For the most part it proves effective, though for recent film developments he has had to use his own adjectives 'untranslatable images', which is an unfortunate term that has been used by a number of filmmakers who emphasize the modernism of film over and above its application to personal expression and interpersonal communication. While this term accurately describes the film that it was intended, it does not accurately describe the work Sitney cited for it. Sitney coined the term in *Film Culture* in 1968 pointing a type of film that 'focus on its image, and that content it has in minimal and subliminal to the surface.' In using it to describe and

analyse films by Warhol, Snow, Sharris, Lenday and Interpina he ignores the aesthetic intention when in these films (often dominated by what five years ago seemed a nihilist structuring) and implies that the audio-visual content of these films is 'untranslatable', when in fact they strike film's continuum to increase changing perceptions of singular images, serial images, and images transposed by colour fields. Unlike the structural films that have followed in the wake of Sitney's original poem, these films say much about life and the film maker's response to it, and are not just decorative film poems.

In other areas Sitney's criticism is more substantial. His relation of early works of the American avant-garde to the European avant-garde tradition displays his in-depth knowledge of both areas of film. (His passing is also revealing that the version of Rene Clair's *Les Ailes* widely circulated — and in the Australian National Library — is not exactly as it was presented during the silent film era, but the first part of the film that formed a prologue to the ballet and only the latter section was actually the cartoon.) In writing about Stan Brakhage and Gregory Markopoulos he adds weight to the view that these are probably the most important artists working in film today. Their mythopoetic cinema is studied in detail and related to their own theoretical writings. Kenneth Anger is also awarded theoretical study, who suggests some value in his work as early as that of Brakhage and Markopoulos. Maya Deren, Sidney Peterson and James Broughton are also viewed above the previous estimations by detailed appreciations of their work.

Sitney sees the American avant-garde film groupings into poems — the Bruce Film, the Bruce Film, the mythopoetic film, the diary film, the graphic film, and the structural film. There is a theoretical development implied, with the structural film being an aesthetic result of the 'ground work' of the earlier experiments. While the work of Len Lye, Harry Smith, Jordan Belson, Robert Rauschenberg and Peter Kubelka can be seen as the aesthetic avant-garde that questions the poetic base of the earlier work and points the authors toward their own important contributions, the work of 'Christian Marclay, Bruce Connor, Ron Rice, Robert Nelson and Larry Jordan has to be appreciated in terms of apocalyptic paintings versus the more important explorations, and the work of Ken Jacobs, Jack Smith, James Miskin and Joseph Cornell needled in terms of the narrative quest for repeated images. In fact, Jacobs and Miskin can be studied in terms of both production and structuralism as well as Smith's work is undoubtedly post-structural. Clearly, while work has only recently been made public by *Anthology Archives*, appears to be an important bridge between European surrealism and some of the more Duchampian concerns of New York filmmakers.

In the richness of the film, further comment is unnecessary. Sitney's book expands one's appetite for the American avant-garde not only creating the desire to see it, but also to see films that have been seen in Australia, but also the desire to see others again, and to know their entry notes, as Sitney has done.

It is a book that will be of considerable importance in the American universities where avant-garde film is studied. Here, where avant-garde film is widely neglected, it serves as propaganda for the movie to suggest a collection of these films for the National Library. And it also serves as a model for those attempting film criticism — for it is clear that Sitney writes a film over and over again before writing about it, not only looks at film frames, reads what the filmmaker has written, listens to what he has said, and brings the full weight of his knowledge to bear in analysing the films. Such writing helps the filmmaker in the development of his craft, filmmakers in their appreciation of the filmmaker work, and deepens our understanding of the art of film.

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Letters:

Dear Sir,

In my review of the film **Number 99** in your July issue I referred to the poor quality of the blow-up to 35mm and said that this "emphasizes the inadequacies of local laboratory facilities." Color-film, the laboratory involved in the production of the 35mm stage has written to me pointing out that the blow-up to 35mm and the 35mm prints were done overseas. In this instance I wish to set the record straight and apologise to Color-film.

Yours sincerely,

Ken Quinnell

Dear Sir,

Phil Taylor and Ross Cooper in their article "A Private Collection" (Cinema Papers, July 1974) have focussed attention on the lack of a true national film archive in Australia and on the deficiencies of the National Library in Canberra in performing some of the functions of a film archive. However, in some respects the article is regrettable. It is clearly a plea for the establishment of an Australian national film archive and cannot be considered simply

as a vehicle for "providing insights into the motives of a film collector".

The "Great Australian apathy" is not entirely to blame. Few Australians know or have had an opportunity to see anything of the full range of activities performed by some of the great film archivists in other countries. You can render a great service to the preservation of Australian history and culture by telling Australians through the pages of *Cinema Papers* what film archives are all about, what we are missing out on, and specifically where the National Library is falling down on the job.

There is no question but that a great debt is owed to film collectors throughout the world, to people like Harry Davidson. The commercial film trade is notoriously careless with its product once it has reached its primary market. Many great and famous films made in many countries of the world have been thought lost to posterity. Some will never be found, but copies of others have been found in private collectors, and we are now able to see a more complete record of the culture and history of the past seventy-five years because of it.

Films become lost for many reasons. They may be destroyed, discarded, mislaid, worn out or decomposed. Private collectors render their service by saving films from being discarded or

destroyed, either deliberately or through ignorance. But they lack the financial resources to preserve films against chemical or physical deterioration.

Your article is regrettable because it implies that Harry Davidson and his fellow collectors represent almost the only means of preserving film for posterity in Australia. Yet you relate the alarming story of a 3500 foot Chaplin film which was gradually trimmed to 450 feet as various sections decomposed. Is this preserved? It is alarming also, that many rare prints of films are projected for the entertainment of collectors and their friends. Running a rare film through a projector is an invitation to disaster, and at the very least it will add to the scratches, strain the already fragile sprocket holes, and bring closer the day that the print is unusable. No film archive will run a rare print through a projector. It is well to remember at this point, the name of the largest established and most respected film archives in the world were established by film enthusiasts and collectors who have laid down most rigid rules and procedures for film preservation.

I too would like to see an original 35mm print of *Mama's Feet*, Fritz Lang's *Metropolis*, and many others. The reason I wish is mainly economic. It costs much more to make 35mm prints, and the film study market

and the film archives are not yet able to support this cost placed on an occasional basis. But it is certainly a price of intolerance with colour segments can be refixed in Australia. The black and white film print shown above is estimated to be a poor substitute for a tinted print with music accompaniment, but it has permitted tens of thousands to see films of many hundreds of screenings which would have long since reduced the collector's original 35mm nitrate prints to stained, tattered ribbons of celluloid.

As well as drawing attention to the shortcomings of the National Library, you should be describing the positive achievements of the library staff in preserving Australian and other countries film heritage. You should be informing your readers that even if the National Library's film vaults are inadequate, they are infinitely superior to the powder kegs represented by private collectors' homes, and you should be inviting people with care of film at home to contact the National Film Collection at the National Library, Canberra (062 62 1111), or in W.A., the Archives Officer at the State Film Archive (24 3641).

Yours sincerely,

B. S. King

(The writer is Secretary of the Australian Council of Film Societies, a member of the State Film Archives Sub-Committee of the W.A. State Film Centre, and has studied film preservation methods at a number of overseas film archives.)

UNITED SOUND APOLOGY

The editors wish to apologise for the typographical errors which occurred in the advertisement placed in the July issue by United Sound Pty. Ltd. The lines referred to are: "Domestic" and "Reproducible" should have read "The last of the Outpost" and "The Kamehameha".

contributors

ROD BISHOP has reviewed for a number of publications and is currently completing a 50 minute fictional film titled *Rainbow Farm*. **JOCKEY CLARKE** is a tutor in political science at La Trobe University and reviews books for a number of publications. **ROSS COOPER** is a film historian, currently lecturing at Monash University. **PATRICIA EDGAR** is a lecturer in media sociology at La Trobe University's Media Centre. **Na Edgar** is co-author of the recently published book *Arts & Sex*. **JOHN FLAUS** lectures in film at the Media Centre, La Trobe University. **TONY GENNANE** is a Melbourne based film critic and independent distributor. **GORDON GLENN** is the Director of Photography at La Trobe University's Media Centre. He is currently completing a documentary on the notorious Australian "Playmate" with Keith Robertson. **MURCKHEDSON** is a tutor in film with Adult Education at Sydney University, a programme co-ordinator for the National Film Theatre of Australia and a regular contributor to various film society

bulletins. **CHARLES MEREWEATHER** is film critic for the Melbourne University journal *Panorama*. **MURKHAM MORRIS** is an ex-psychiatric patient, feminist sex movement contributor to *The Observer*. **JOHN DYKALA** is the Melbourne film critic for the Australian Broadcasting Commission. **KEN QUINNELL** is a regular contributor to *Cinema Papers* and has written film opinions for a number of periodicals. **MIKE RICHARDS** is a journalist and political analyst. He is currently lecturing at Melbourne University and editing a volume of essays titled *The American Connection*. **GRAHAM SHIRLEY** is an independent filmmaker and a graduate of the Film and Television School. **DAVID STRATTON** is the director of the Sydney Film Festival. **ALRIE THOMAS**, the director of the Sydney Film Society Co-operative, is a film-maker, TV producer and regular contributor to a number of magazines. **JOHN TITTENSOR** is a teacher and regular book reviewer for a number of newspapers and magazines.

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